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LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

MARIA EDGEWORTH

EDGEWORTHSTOWN HOUSE.

THE

LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

MARIA EDGEWORTH

EDITED BY

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AUTHOR OF

'MEMORIALS OF A QUIET LIFE,' 'THE STORY OF TWO NOBLE LIVES,' ETC.

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MARIA EDGEWORTH

MARIA *to* MISS WALLER.

COPPET, *Sept.* 1, 1820.

I AM sure that you have heard of us, and of all we have done and seen from Edgeworthstown as far as Berne: from thence we went to Thun: there we took *char-à-bancs*, little low carriages, like half an Irish jaunting car, with four wheels, and a square tarpaulin awning over our heads. Jolting along on these vehicles, which would go over a house, I am sure, without being overturned or without being surprised, we went—the Swiss postillion jolting along at the same round rate up and down, without ever looking back to see whether the carriages and passengers follow, yet now and then turning to point to mountains, glaciers, and cascades. The valley of Lauterbrunn is beautiful; a clear, rushing cascady stream rushes through it: fine chestnuts, walnuts, and sycamores scattered about, the verdure on the mountains between the woods fresh and bright. Pointed mountains covered with snow in the midst of every sign of flowery summer strike us with a sense of the sublime which never grows familiar. The height of the Staubach waterfall, which we saw early in the morning, astonished my mind, I think, more than my

eyes, looking more like thin vapour than water—more like *strings* of water; and I own I was disappointed, after all I had heard of it.

We went on to the valley of Grindelwald, where we saw, as we thought two fields off, a glacier to which we wished to go; and accordingly we left the *char-à-bancs*, and walked down the sloping field, expecting to reach it in a few minutes, but we found it a long walk—about two miles. To this sort of deception about distances we are continually subject, from the clearness of the air, and from the unusual size of the objects, for which we have no points of comparison, and no previous habits of estimating. We were repaid for our walk, however, when we came to the source of the Lutzen, which springs under an arch of ice in the glacier. The river runs clear and sparkling through the valley, while over the arch rests a mountain of ice, and beside it a valley of ice; not smooth or uniform, but in pyramids, and arches, and blocks of immense size, and between them clefts and ravines. The sight and the sound of the waters rushing, and the solemn immovability of the ice, formed a sublime contrast.

On the grass at the very foot of this glacier were some of the most delicious wood-strawberries I ever tasted.

At Interlaken we met Sneyd[1] and Henrica in a very pleasant situation in that most beautiful country. We parted on the banks of the lake of Brienz. On this lake we had an hour's delightful sailing, and *put into* a little bay and climbed up a mountain to see the cascade of the Giesbach, by far the most beautiful I ever beheld, and beyond all of which painting or poetry had ever given me any idea. Indeed it is particularly difficult, if not absolutely impos-

[1] Her half-brother, son of the third Mrs. Edgeworth, and his wife Henrica Broadhurst.

sible, to give a representation of cascades which depend for effect upon the height from which they fall, the rush of motion, the sparkling and foam of the water in motion, and the magnitude of the surrounding objects.

After passing the lake of Brienz, we came to the far-famed valley of Meyringen, which had been much cried up to us; but, whether from the usual perverseness of human nature, or from being spoiled by the luxury of cascades, valleys, and Alps we had previously seen, we were disappointed in it, though, to do it justice, it has nine cascades.

We slept at a wooden inn, and rose at three; and, before four, mounted on our horses, set off for the Brunig; and after having gone up La Flegère at Chamouni, the crossing the Brunig was a small consideration. Brava! brava!

But—something happened to me and my horse; the result being that I went up the Brunig and down the Brunig on my two legs instead of on the horse's four, and was not the least tired with my three hours' scramble up and scramble down. At the little town of Sarnen we ate eggs and drank sour wine, and Mr. Moilliet, Fanny, and Harriet remounted their horses; Mrs. Moilliet, Emily, Susan, and I went in a *char-à-banc* of a different construction; not sitting sideways, but on two phaeton seats, one behind the other, facing the horses. Such jolting, such *trimming* from side to side; but we were not overturned, and got out at the town of Stanzstadt, where, after seeing in the dirtiest inn's dirtiest room a girl with a tremendous black eye, besides the two with which nature had favoured her, we took boat again about sunset, and had a two hours' delicious rowing across the lake of Lucerne, which I prefer to every other I have seen—the moon full and placid on

the waters, the stars bright in the deep blue sky, the town of Lucerne shadowed before us with lights here and there in the windows. The air became still, and the sky suddenly clouded over; thunder was heard; bright flashes of lightning darted from behind the mountains and across the town, making it at intervals distinctly visible for a moment. It was dark when we landed, and we had to pass through two or three streets, servants, guides, bag, and baggage, groping our way; and oh, wretched mortals, went to the wrong place, and before we could reach the right one, down poured a waterspout of a shower on our devoted heads and backs. In five minutes, running as hard as we could, we were wet through; and Fanny, in crossing the street and plucking at the guide's bundle for a cloak for me, was nearly run over, but stood it; and, all dripping, we reached our inn, Le Cheval Blanc. An hour spent in throwing off wet clothes and putting on dry—tea, coffee—bed—bugs, and sleep, nevertheless.

We rejoined our landau and *calèche* at Lucerne, and proceeded in them to Zug, where there is a famous convent or *Frauenkloster*, which escaped being destroyed during the Revolution, because the abbess and nuns established a school for the female children of the neighbourhood, where they still continue to teach them to read and work: Madame Gautier had desired us to go and see it, and to it we walked: rang at the bell, were told that the nuns were all in the refectory, and were asked to wait. The nuns' repast was soon finished, and one came with a very agreeable, open countenance and fresh, brown complexion, well fed and happy-looking, becomingly dressed in snow-white hood and pelerine and brown gown. Bowing courteously, she by signs—for she could speak neither French nor English—invited us to follow her, and led us through

cloister and passage to the room of the boarders; not nuns, only there for their education. A pretty Italian girl, with corkscrew ringlets of dark hair, rose from her pianoforte to receive us, and spoke with much grace and self-complacency Italian-French, and accompanied by way of interpreter our own conductress, who *motioned* us to the sitting-room, where nuns and pensioners were embroidering, with silk, cotton, chenille, and beads, various pretty, ugly, and fantastical, useless things. Luckily, none were finished at that moment, and their empty basket saved our purses and our taste from danger or disgrace.

I had spied in the corner of the Italian interpreter's apartment a daub of a print of the King and Queen of France taking leave of their family, with a German inscription; and thinking the Abbé Edgeworth had a good right to be in it, and as a kind of German notion of an Abbé appeared in the print, and something like Edgewatz in the German words, I put my finger on the spot, and bade the interpreter tell the nuns and the abbess, who now appeared, that we were nearly related to the Abbé Edgeworth, Louis XVI.'s confessor. This with some difficulty was put into the Italian's head, and through her into the nuns', and through them, in German, into the abbess' superior head. I heard a mistake in the first repetition, which ran, no doubt, through all the editions, viz. that we were *proches parents*, not to the King's confessor, but to the King! The nuns opened the whites of their eyes, and smiled regularly in succession as the bright idea reached them and the abbess—a good-looking soul, evidently of superior birth and breeding to the rest, all gracious and courteous in demeanour to the strangers.

A thought struck me—or, as Mr. Barrett of Navan expressed it, "I took a notion, ma'am"—that Fanny

would look well in a nun's dress; and boldly I went to work with my interpreter, who thought the request at first too bold to make; but I forced it through to nun the first, who backed and consulted nun the second, who at my instigation referred in the last appeal to the abbess, who, in her supreme good-nature, smiled, and pointed upstairs; and straight our two nuns carried Fanny and me off with them up stairs and stairs, and through passages and passages, to a little nun's room—I mean a nun's little room—nice with flowers and scraps of relics and religious prints. The nuns ran to a press in the wall, and took out ever so many plaited coifs and bands, and examined them all carefully as birthnight beauty would have done, to fix upon one which was most becoming. Nun the second ran for the rest of the habiliments, and I the while disrobed Fanny of her worldly sprigged cambric muslin and straw hat, which, by the bye, nun the second eyed with a fond admiration which proved she had not quite forgotten this world's conveniences. The eagerness with which they dressed Fanny, the care with which they adjusted the frontlet, and tucked in the ringlets, and placed the coif on her head, and pulled it down to exactly the right becoming sit, was exceedingly amusing. No coquette dressing for Almack's could have shown more fastidious nicety, or expressed more joy and delight at the toilette's triumphant success. They exclaimed in German, and lifted up hands and eyes in admiration of Fanny's beautiful appearance in nun's attire. The universal language of action and the no less universal language of flattery was not lost upon me: I really loved these nuns, and thought of my Aunt Ruxton's nuns, who were so good to her. Down corridors and stairs we now led our novice, and the nuns showed her how to hold her

hands tucked into her sleeves, and asked her name; and having learned it was Fanny, Frances, Sister Frances, were again overjoyed, because one of them was named Frances, the other was Agnes. When, between Sister Agnes and Sister Frances the first, Sister Frances the second entered the room, where we had left the abbess, Mrs. Moilliet, Emily, and Susan, they did not know Fanny in the least, and Harriet declared that, at the first moment, even she did not know her. Mrs. Moilliet told me she said to herself, "What a very graceful nun is coming now!"

After all had gathered round, and laughed, and admired, the abbess signified to me, through our interpreter, that we could do no less than leave her in the convent with them, and grew so mighty fond of Fanny, that I was in as great a hurry to get her nun's dress off as I had been to get it on; and when I had disrobed her, I could not think of a single thing to give the poor nuns, having no pockets, and my bag left in the carriage! At last, feeling all over myself, I twitched my little gold earrings out of my ears, and gave one, and Fanny gave the other, to the two nuns; and Sister Frances and Sister Agnes fell on their knees to pray for and thank us.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

PREGNY, *Sept.* 6, 1820.

The account of the loss of the three guides at Chamouni is, alas! too true: three perished by stepping into the new-fallen snow which covered the crevasses; one was Joseph Carrier, who was Harriet's guide. Mrs. Marcet has just told us that, at a breakfast given by M. Prevost to M. Arago, and many scientific and literary

people, a few days after the accident, parties ran high on this as on all affairs: some said it was all M. Hamel's fault; some, that it was all the guides' own fault. One said he wished one of the English gentlemen who was of the party was present, for then they should know the truth. At this moment the servant announced a stranger, "Monsieur Rumford," the name sounded like as the man pronounced it, and they thought it was Count Rumford come to life. M. Prevost went out and returned with Mr. Dornford, one of the Englishmen who had been of Dr. Hamel's party, who came, he said, to beg permission to state the plain facts, as he heard they had been told to Dr. Hamel's disadvantage. He, Dr. Hamel, Mr. Henderson, and M. Lelleque, a French naturalist, set out: the guides had not dissuaded them from attempting to go up Mont Blanc—only advised them to wait till a threatening cloud had passed. When it was gone, they all set out in high spirits; the guides cutting holes in the snow for their feet. This it is supposed loosened the snow newly fallen, and a quantity poured down over their heads. Mr. Dornford had pushed on before the guides; he shook off the snow as it fell, and felt no apprehension: on the contrary, he laughed as he *pawed* it away, and was making his way on, when he heard a cry from his companions, and looking back he saw some of them struggling in the snow. He helped to extricate them, saw a point moving in the snow, went to it, and pulled out Marie Coutay, one of the guides: he was quite purple, but recovered in the air. Looked round—two guides were missing: looked for them in vain, but saw a deep ravine covered with fresh snow, into which they must have fallen.

To MRS. RUXTON

LAUSANNE, *Sept.* 14, 1820.

Ages ago I promised myself the pleasure of dating a letter from Lausanne to my dear aunt, and now that I am at the place of which I have so often heard her speak, which I have so often wished to see, I can hardly believe it is not a dream. A fortnight ago we were here, returning from our tour through les Petits Cantons; but at that time we could not enjoy anything, as we had heard from Sneyd, whom we met at Interlaken, of Lucy's[1] terrible illness. What a comfort to my mother to think that she was saved by your Sophy's steadiness and presence of mind, and by Lovell's decision and Crampton's skill and kindness!

Yesterday we began our tour round the Lake of Geneva —Dumont, Fanny, Harriet, and I—in one of the carriages of the country, a mixture of a sociable and an Irish jingle, with some resemblance to a hearse, from a covered top on iron poles, which keeps off the sun. It was late when we arrived here, and so dark, with only a few lamps strung across the street here and there, we could scarcely see the forms of the great black horses scrambling and struggling up the almost perpendicular streets. How could you ever have borne it, my dear aunt? You must have been in perpetual fear of your life! Lord Bellamont's description of the county of Cavan—all acclivity and declivity, without any intervention of horizontality—I am sure applies to Lausanne. I am sure travelled horses from all parts of the world say to each other when they meet in the stable, "Were you ever at Lausanne? Don't you hate Lausanne? How could men build a town in such a place?

[1] Youngest daughter of the fourth Mrs. Edgeworth.

What asses! And how provoking, while we are breaking our backs, to hear them talking of picturesque beauty! I should like to see how they would look if we let them slip, and roll down these picturesque situations!"

Lausanne is, nevertheless, so full that we could scarcely find room; and after Dumont and his servant had gone back and forward to Le Faucon, the Lion d'or, Les Balances, etc. etc., all full to the garrets, we were thankful at finding ourselves in the worst inn's worst room, where, however, the beds were clean and good. We are not grumblers, so we drank coffee and were all very happy; and while the rooms were preparing Dumont read to us a pretty little French piece, *Le faux Savant!*

Sept. 15.

Our first object this morning was to see Madame de Montolieu, the author of *Caroline de Lichfield*, to whom I had a letter of introduction. She was not at Lausanne, we were told, but at her country house, Bussigny, about a league and a half from the town. We had a delicious fine morning, and through romantic lanes and up and down hills, till we found ourselves in the middle of a ploughed field, when the coachman's pride of ignorance had to give up, and he had to beg his way to Bussigny, a village of scattered Swiss cottages high upon rocks, with far-spreading prospects below. In the court of the house which we were told was Madame de Montolieu's we saw a lady, of a tall, upright, active-looking figure, with much the appearance of a gentlewoman; but we could not think that this was Madame de Montolieu, because for the last half-hour Dumont, impatient at our losing our way, had been saying she must be too old to receive us. "She was very old thirty years ago; she must be *quatre-vingt*, at least: at last

it came to *quatre-vingt-dix.* This lady did not look above fifty. She came up to the carriage as it stopped, and asked whom we wished to see. The moment I saw her eyes, I knew it was Madame de Montolieu, and stooping down from the open carriage I put into her hand the note of introduction and our card. She never opened the note, but the instant her eye had glanced upon the card, she repeated the name with a voice of joyful welcome. I jumped out of the carriage, and she embraced me so cordially, and received my sisters so kindly, and M. Dumont so politely, that we were all at ease and acquainted and delighted before we were half-way upstairs. While she went into the ante-chamber for a basket of peaches, I had time to look at the prints hung in the little drawing-room: they had struck me the moment we came in as scenes from *Caroline de Lichfield.* Indifferent, old-fashioned, provoking figures, Caroline and Count Walstein in the fashions of thirty years ago.

When Madame de Montolieu returned, she bade me not look at them; "but I will tell you how they came to be here." They had been given to her by Gibbon: he was the person who published *Caroline de Lichfield.* She had written it for the entertainment of an aunt who was ill: a German story of three or four pages gave her the first idea of it. "I never could invent: give me a hint, and I can go on and supply the details and the characters." Just when *Caroline de Lichfield* was finished, Gibbon became acquainted with her aunt, who showed it to him: he seized upon the MS., and said it must be published. It ran in a few months through several editions; and just when it was in its first vogue, Gibbon happened to be in London, saw these prints, and brought them over to her, telling her he had brought her a present of prints from London, but that

he would only give them to her on condition that she would promise to hang them, and let them always hang, in her drawing-room. After many vain efforts to find out what manner of things they were, Gibbon and curiosity prevailed; she promised, and there they hang.

She must have been a beautiful woman: she told me she is seventy: fine dark, enthusiastic eyes, a quickly varying countenance, full of life, and with all the warmth of heart and imagination which is thought to belong only to youth.

We went into a wooden gallery reaching from one side of the house to the other, at one end of which was a table, where she had been writing when we arrived. We often took leave, but were loth to depart. Dumont luckily asked if she could direct us to a fine old chateau in the neighbourhood, which we had been told was particularly well worth seeing—Viernon. "It is my brother's," she said, and she would go with us and show it. The carriage was sent round to the high road, and we went by a walk along a river, romantically beautiful. Just as we came to a cascade and a wooden bridge, a little pug dog came running down, and the Baron and Madame de Polier appeared. Madame de Montolieu ran on to her brother, and explained who we were. Madame is an Englishwoman, and, to my surprise, I found she was niece to my father's old friend, Mr. Mundy of Markeaton. We were all very sorry to part with Madame de Montolieu; however, we returned to Lausanne, and Dumont in the evening read out *Le Somnambule*—very laughable when so well read.

PREGNY, *Sept.* 20.

Next day beautiful drive to Vevay, as you know. After visiting Chillon, where Lord Byron's name and *coat of arms*

are cut upon Bonnivar's pillar, I read the poem again, and think it most sublime and pathetic. How can that man have perverted so much feeling as was originally given to him!

Have you been at St. Maurice? If you have not, I cannot give you an idea of the surprise and delight we felt at the first sight of the view going down through the archway! But what a miserable town! After Fanny had sketched from the window of the inn a group of children, we finished our evening by hearing Dumont read, incomparably well, *Les Chateaux d'Espagne.* In the night we were awakened by the most horrible female voice, singing, or rather screeching, in the passage—the voice of a person having a *goître*, and either mad or drunk. There had been a marriage of country people in the house, and this lady had drunk a little too much. We heard Dumont's door open, and he silenced or drove her away.

Next morning we went, on part of the Simplon route which Buonaparte made, to St. Gingulph, where we spent some hours on the Lake. Dumont told us he had been there with Rogers, who was so delighted with its beauty, that instead of one he spent six days there.

Not having met the Moilliets as expected at St. Maurice, we became very anxious about them; but upon our arrival at Pregny next day, found them all very quietly there. Mrs. Moilliet's not being very well kept them at home. Nothing can be kinder than they are to us.

We dined two days after our return to Pregny at Coppet: the Duke and Duchess de Broglie are now there, and we met M. de Stein,[1] a great diplomatist, and M. Pictet Deodati, of whom Madame de Staël said, if one

[1] Carl, Baron Stein, the Minister of Frederick William IV. of Prussia.

could take hold of Pictet Deodati's neckcloth, and give him one good shaking, what a number of good things would come out!

MALAGNY, DR. MARCET'S, *Sept.*

We came here last Friday, and have spent our time most happily with our excellent friend Mrs. Marcet. His children are all so fond of Dr. Marcet, we see that he is their companion and friend. They have all been happily busy in making a paper fire-balloon, sixteen feet in diameter, and thirty feet high. A large company were invited to see it mount. It was a fine evening. The balloon was filled on the green before the house. The lawn slopes down to the lake, and opposite to it magnificent Mont Blanc, the setting sun shining on its summit. After some heart-beatings about a hole in the top of the balloon, through which the smoke was seen to issue—an evil omen—it went up successfully. The sun had set, but we saw its reflection beautifully on one side of the balloon, so that it looked like a globe half ice, half fire, or half moon, half sun, self-suspended in the air. It went up exactly a mile. I say exactly, because Pictet measured the height by an instrument of a new invention, which I will describe when we meet. The air here is so clear, that at this height we saw it distinctly.

M. Pictet de Rochemont, brother to our old friend, has taken most kind pains to translate the best passages from my father's *Memoirs* for the *Bibliothèque Universelle.* We were yesterday at his house with a large party, and met Madame Necker de Saussure—much more agreeable than her book. Her manner and figure reminded us of our beloved Mrs. Moutray: she is deaf, too, and she has the same resignation, free from suspicion, in her expression

when she is not speaking, and the same gracious attention to the person who speaks to her.

CHATEAU DE COPPET, *Sept.* 28,
8 A.M.

We came here yesterday, and here we are in the very apartments occupied by M. Necker, opening into what is now the library, but what was once that theatre on which Madame de Staël used to act her own *Corinne*. Yesterday evening, when Madame de Broglie had placed me next the oldest friend of the family, M. de Bonstettin, he whispered to me, "You are now in the exact spot, in the very chair where Madame de Staël used to sit!" Her friends were excessively attached to her. This old man talked of her with tears in his eyes, and with all the sudden change of countenance and twitchings of the muscles which mark strong, uncontrollable feeling.

There is something inexpressibly melancholy, awful, in this house, in these rooms, where the thought continually recurs, Here Genius *was!* here *was* Ambition, Love! all the great struggles of the passions; here was Madame de Staël! The respect paid to her memory by her son and daughter, and by M. de Broglie, is touching. The little Rocca, seven years old, is an odd, cold, prudent, old-man sort of a child, as unlike as possible to the son you would have expected from such parents. M. Rocca, brother to the boy's father, is here: handsome, but I know no more. M. Sismondi and his wife dined here, and three Saladins, father, mother, and daughter. M. de Staël has promised to show to me Gibbon's love-letters to his grandmother, ending regularly with "Je suis, mademoiselle, avec les sentimens qui font le désespoir de ma vie," etc.

M. de Bonstettin—Gray the poet's friend—told me that

in Sweden, about thirty years ago, he saw potatoes in the corner of a gentleman's garden as a curiosity. "They tell me, sir," said the gentleman, "that in some countries they eat the roots of this plant!" Now they are cultivated there, and the people have become fond of them.

With M. de Staël and Madame de Broglie Miss Edgeworth was particularly happy. It had been reported that Madame de Staël had said of Maria's writings "que Miss Edgeworth était digne de l'enthousiasme, mais qu'elle s'est perdue dans la triste utilité." "Ma mère n'a jamais dit ça," Madame de Broglie indignantly declared, "elle était incapable!" She saw, indeed, the enthusiastic admiration which Maria felt for her mother's genius, and she was gratified by the regard and esteem which Maria showed for her and her brother, and the sympathy she expressed in their affection for each other, and in their kindness to their little Rocca brother.

MARIA *to* MISS HONORA EDGEWORTH.

LYONS, HOTEL DU NORD, *Oct.* 22, 1820.

LYONS! is it possible that I am really at Lyons, of which I have heard my father speak so much? Lyons! where his active spirit once reigned, and where now scarce a trace, a memory of him remains. The Perraches all

gone, Carpentiers no more to be heard of, Bons a name unknown; De la Verpilliere—one descendant has a fine house here, but he is in the country.

The look of the town and the fine façades of the principal buildings, and the Place de Bellecour, were the more melancholy to me from knowing them so well in the prints in the great portfolio, with such a radiance thrown over them by his descriptions. I hear his voice saying, La Place de Bellecour and l'Hotel de Ville—these remain after all the horrors of the Revolution—but human creatures, the best, the ablest, the most full of life and gaiety, all passed away.

It is a relief to my mind to pour out all this to you. I do not repent having come to Lyons; I should not have forgiven myself if I had not.

I have been writing to dear Mrs. Moilliet—nothing could exceed her kindness and Mr. Moilliet's. Dumont was excessively touched at parting with us, and gave Fanny and Harriet *La Fontaine* and *Gresset*, and to me a map of the lake—of the tour we took so happily together.

To MRS. RUXTON.

PARIS, *Nov.* 1820.

Never lose another night's sleep, or another moment's thought on the *Quarterly Review*[1]—I have never read and never will read it.

I write this merely to tell you that I have at last had the pleasure of seeing Madame la Comtesse de Vaudreuil, the

[1] An article on Maria Edgeworth's *Memoirs* of her Father, full of doubt, ridicule, misrepresentation, and acrimony. Miss Edgeworth never read this *Review* till 1835, when she was induced to do so by a letter from Mr. Peabody alluding to it. It was then powerless to give her pain, for its anonymous falsehoods had long fallen into oblivion.

daughter of your friend; she is an exceedingly pleasing woman, of high fashion, with the remains of great beauty, courteous and kind to us beyond all expectation. She had but a few days in Paris, and she made out two for us; she took us to the Conciergerie to see, by lamp-light, the dungeons where the poor Queen and Madame Elizabeth were confined, now fitted up as little chapels. In the Queen's is an altar inscribed with her letter to the King, expressing forgiveness of her enemies. Tears streamed from the eyes of the young Countess de Vaudreuil, the daughter-in-law, as she looked at this altar, and the place where the Queen's bed was. Who do you think accompanied us to this place? Lady Beauchamp, Lady Longford's mother, a great friend of Madame de Vaudreuil's, with whom we dined the next day, and who had procured for us the Duc de Choiseul's box at the Théâtre Français, when the house was to be uncommonly crowded to see Mademoiselle Duchenois in *Athalie* "avec tous les chœurs," and a most striking spectacle it was! I had never seen Mademoiselle Duchenois to perfection before.

MRS. MARCET *to* MARIA EDGEWORTH.

MALAGNY, *Nov.* 15, 1820.

I cannot make up my mind, my dear friend, to take my departure[1] for a still more distant country without again bidding you adieu. I have hesitated for some time past, "Shall I or shall I not write to Miss Edgeworth?" for I felt that I could not write without touching on an article in the *Quarterly*—a subject which makes my blood boil with indignation, and which rouses every feeling of contempt and

[1] Mrs. Marcet was just setting out for Italy.

abhorrence. I might indeed refrain from the expression of these sentiments, but how could I restrain all those feelings of the warmest interest, the tenderest sympathy, and the softest pity for your wounded feelings? I well remember the wish you one day so piously expressed to me that your father could look down from heaven and see the purity and zeal of your intentions in writing his *Memoirs;* I am sure your HEAVENLY FATHER does see them. And I feel that this unjust, unchristian, inquisitorial attack will not only develop fresh sentiments of the tenderest nature in your friends, but also rally every human being of sound sense around you.

MARIA EDGEWORTH *to* MRS. EDGEWORTH.

PARIS, *Nov.* 15, 1820.

You would scarcely believe, my dear friends, the calm of mind and the sort of satisfied resignation I feel as to my father's *Life.* I suppose the two years of doubt and extreme anxiety that I felt, exhausted all my power of doubting. I know that I have done my very best, I know that I have done my duty, and I firmly believe that if my dear father could see the whole he would be satisfied with what I have done.

We have seen Mademoiselle Mars twice, or thrice rather, in the *Mariage de Figaro* and in the little pieces of *Le Jaloux sans amour*, and *La jeunesse de Henri Cinq*, and admire her exceedingly. *En petit comité* the other night at the Duchesse d'Escars, a discussion took place between the Duchesse de la Force, Marmont, and Pozzo di Borgo, on the *bon et mauvais ton* of different expressions—*bonne société* is an *expression bourgeoise*—you may say *bonne compagnie* or *la haute société.* "Voilà des nuances," as

Madame d'Escars said. Such a wonderful jabbering as these grandees made about these small matters. It put me in mind of a conversation in the *World* on good company which we all used to admire.

We have seen a great deal of our dear Delesserts, and of Madame de Rumford,[1] who gave us a splendid and most agreeable dinner. And one evening with the Princess Potemkin, who is—take notice—only a Princess by courtesy, as she has married a Potemkin, who is not a Prince, and though she was born Princess Galitzin, she loses her rank by marrying an inferior, according to Russian and French custom, and they are, with reason, surprised at our superior gallantry, once a lady always a lady. But whether Princess or not Princess, our Madame Potemkin is most charming, and you may bless your stars that you are not obliged to read a page of panegyric upon her. She was as much delighted to see us again, as we were to see her; she was alone with Madame de Noisville, that happy mixture of my Aunt Fox[2] and Mrs. Lataffiere. We went from Madame Potemkin to Madame d'Haussonville's, with her we found Madame de Bouillé playing at billiards, just in the attitude in which we had left her three months ago. Saturday I had a bad headache, but recovered in the evening; and Monday we dined at Madame Potemkin's, where we met her aunt, a Princess Galitzin, a thin, tall, odd, very clever woman, daughter to that Prince Shuvaloff, to whom Voltaire wrote eternally, and she is *imbued* with anecdotes of that period, very well bred, and quick in conversation. She is always afraid of catching cold, and

[1] First married to Lavoisier, the celebrated chemist, then to Count Rumford, the scientist, from whom she was separated for many years. She was now again a widow.

[2] Mary, wife of Francis Fox, elder sister of Mr. Edgeworth and Mrs. Ruxton.

always wears a velvet cap, and is always wrapped up in shawls and pelisses in going from house to house—*à cela près*, a reasonable woman.

After leaving Madame Potemkin's we went to see—whom do you think? Guess all round the breakfast-table before you turn over the leaf; if anybody guesses right, I guess it will be Aunt Mary.

Madame de la Rochejacquelin[1]—She had just arrived from the country, and we found ourselves in a large hotel, in which all the winds of heaven were blowing, and in which, as we went upstairs and crossed the ante-chambers, all was darkness, except one candle which the servant carried before us. In a small bedroom, well furnished, with a fire just lighted, we found Madame de la Rochejacquelin lying on a sofa—her two daughters at work—one spinning with a distaff, and the other embroidering muslin. Madame is a large fat woman, with a broad round fair face, with a most open benevolent expression, as benevolent as Molly Bristow's or as Mrs. Brinkley's. Her hair cut short, and perfectly gray, as seen under her cap; the rest of her face much too young for such gray locks, not at all the hard weatherbeaten look that had been described to us; and though her face and bundled form and dress, all *squashed* on a sofa, did not at first promise much of gentility, you could not hear her speak or see her for three minutes without perceiving that she was well-born and well-bred. She had hurt her leg, which was the cause of her lying on the sofa. It seemed a grievous penance, as she is of as active a temper as ever. She says her health is perfect, but a nervous disease in her eyes has nearly deprived her of sight—she could hardly see my face, though I sat as close as I could go to the sofa.

[1] Widow of the Vendean hero.

"I am always sorry," said she, "when any stranger sees me, parceque je sais que je détruis toute illusion. Je sais que je devrais avoir l'air d'une héroïne, et surtout que je devrais avoir l'air malheureuse ou épuisé au moins—rien de tout cela, hélas!"

She is much better than a heroine—she is benevolence and truth itself. She begged her daughters to take us into the *salon* to show us what she thought would interest us. She apologised for the cold of these rooms—and well she might; when the double doors were opened I really thought Eolus himself was puffing in our faces; we shawled ourselves well before we ventured in. At one end of the *salon* is a picture of M. de Lescure, and at the other, of Henri de la Rochejacquelin, by Gérard and Girardet, presents from the King. Fine military figures. In the boudoir is one of M. de la Rochejacquelin, much the finest of all—she has never yet looked at this picture. Far from being disappointed, I was much gratified by this visit.

To Miss Lucy Edgeworth.

Calais, *Dec.* 5, 1820.

It is a great satisfaction to me, my dear Lucy, to feel that we are now so much nearer to you, and that before I finish this little note we shall be still nearer to you in the same United Kingdom, so that in eight days we can have an answer to questions about you; what a difference from the three long weeks we used to wait at Geneva.

And now, my dear Lucy, I must employ you to break to my mother an important secret. Choose a proper time for speaking to her on the subject, when she is not very busy, when her mind is at ease, that is, when you are

pretty well. My aunts and Honora may be in the room, if you think proper. Begin by saying that I know both my mother and Lovell are so kind and have such confidence in me that I am sure they will not hastily object to the introduction of a new person into the family, though they may perhaps feel a little surprised at hearing of my having actually decided upon such a measure without writing first to consult them. I have actually brought with me from Paris, and intend, unless I am actually forbidden, to bring with me to Edgeworthstown, a French washerwoman. I cannot expect that Lovell should build a house for her, though I know he has long had it in contemplation to build a laundry; but my little French woman does not require a house, she can live in our house, if he and my mother, and my aunts please, and I will engage that she shall give no sort of trouble, and shall cost nothing. She is a *sourde et muette*, an elderly woman with a very good countenance, always cheerful, and going on with her own business without minding other people's. She was recommended to me by Madame François Delessert, and has lived for some time in their family, much liked by all, especially by the children, for whom she washed constantly, till one of her legs was hurt, so that she cannot work now quite as well as formerly. But still she washed so as to give general satisfaction. Fanny and Harriet like her washing, and I am sure my aunts will like it and her very much; and I think she might, till some other place be found for her, sleep in my mother's dressing-room.

And here, my dear Lucy, I beg you will pause and hear what everybody says about this washerwoman and this plan.

And after five minutes given to deliberation, go on and say, that if no better place can be found for my

washerwoman, she may stand on my mother's chimney-piece![1]

No more nonsense at present.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

CALAIS, DESSIN'S HOTEL, *Dec.* 5, 1820.

Coming back to this place, to the same room where we were seven months ago, the whole seems to me and to my companions like a delightful dream, but in waking from Alps, and glaciers, and cascades, and *Mont Blanc*, and troops of acquaintance in splendid succession and visionary confusion, in waking from this wonderful dream, the sober certainty of happiness remains and assures us that all which has passed is not a dream. All our old friends at Paris are still more our friends than ever, and many new ones made. Every expectation, every hope that I had formed for this journey has been more than gratified, far surpassed by the reality; and we return with thorough satisfaction to our own country, looking to our dear home for permanent happiness, without a wish unsatisfied or a regret for anything we have left behind, except our friends.

To MISS RUXTON.

MALL, CLIFTON, *Dec.* 17, 1820.

We have spent a week here with Emmeline,[2] and very happy I am that we were able to give her this pleasure. Zoe and Emmeline are very nice-looking girls, pleasing in their manners and affectionate in their dispositions.

[1] A pretty little French toy given by Madame François Delessert.

[2] The eldest of Miss Edgeworth's own sisters, wife of John King, Esq., of Clifton.

We are not, tell my aunt, likely to be drawn in to talk or take any part about the Queen, as we know nothing of her trial. She sent notice to Lady Elizabeth Whitbread that she would dine with her if she knew the hour. Lady Elizabeth answered that her hour varied from five to nine, as it suited her son's convenience. The Queen took it as it was meant, as a refusal.

To MISS HONORA EDGEWORTH.

BOWOOD, *Dec.* 20, 1820.

I write to you sitting in the bow (or beau, or bay) window of the room with yellow furniture with black stars, into which we were shown by Lady Lansdowne. Oh, my dear Honora, how everything here reminds me of you!

Lady Lansdowne's reception of us was most cordial. She had been out walking, and came to us only half dressed, with a shawl thrown over her. Lord Lansdowne is at Bath, at an agricultural meeting. Mr. and Mrs. Ord and their son, an Eton youth, are here; Lady Elizabeth and Captain Fielding—he is very gentlemanlike and agreeable; Mr. Hallam; the two Mr. Smiths, whom you remember, and Mr. Fazakerley—very clever; and best of all, Miss Vernon and Miss Fox: she introduced to Fanny and Harriet her niece, Miss Fox, very handsome and agreeable—not come out.

EASTON GREY, *Dec.* 26.

I intended this frank for my mother, but Mr. Ricardo turned it into Miss instead of Mrs.; and why I asked for a frank at all I cannot tell, except for the honour and glory of having one from David Ricardo. He has been here one whole day, and is exceedingly agreeable. This house is delightful, in a beautiful situation, fine trees, fine valleys,

and soft verdure, even at this season: the library-drawing-room with low sofas, plenty of movable tables, open bookcases, and all that speaks the habits and affords the means of agreeable occupation. Easton Grey might be a happy model of what an English country gentleman's house should be; and Mrs. Smith's kind, well-bred manners, and Mr. Smith's literary and sensible conversation, make this house one of the most agreeable I ever saw.

At Bowood there was a happy mixture of sense and nonsense. Lord Lansdowne was talking to me on the nice little sofa by the fire very seriously of Windham's life and death, and of a journal which he wrote to cure himself of indecision of character. Enter suddenly, with a great burst of noise from the breakfast-room, a tribe of gentlemen neighing like horses. You never saw a man look more surprised than Lord Lansdowne.

Re-enter the same performers on all-fours, grunting like pigs.

Then a company of ladies and gentlemen in dumb-show, doing a country visit, ending with asking for a frank, curtseying, bowing, and exit.—"*Neighbour.*"

Then enter all the gentlemen, some with their fingers on their eyes, some delighted with themselves.—"*I.*"

Then re-enter Lord Lansdowne, the two Mr. Smiths, Mr. Hallam, and Mr. Fazakerley, each with little dolls made of their pocket handkerchiefs, nursing and playing with them.—"*Doll.*"

Exit, and re-enter, carrying, and surrounding, and worshipping Mrs. Ord in an arm-chair.—"*Idol.*"

This does not do for sober reading, but it produced much laughter.

27th.

We have been at Badminton: magnificent: library delightful. Here, as at Trentham, a gallery opens into the chapel, also the village church, and here is a great curiosity —Raphael's first chalk sketch of the Transfiguration; that is, of all the figures in the lower part: wonderfully fine, the woman kneeling, and the boy possessed, and the man holding him—admirable. Some fine pictures, too, though not a professed collection. Saw in the park a fine herd of red deer, the finest, it is said, in England. How shall I find room to tell you of the Roman pavements and Roman town found near this place, much better worth than all I have been penning! For nonsense I always have time and space.

To MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *March* 21.

The Archbishop of Tuam breakfasted here this morning, and sat with Lucy in her room: he said he thought he should be the better all his life for having seen such an example of patience and resignation in so young a person. He says he was amused during the Queen's trial by the sight of the processions in honour of Her Majesty: the glass manufacturers with their brilliant wares, ladies in landaus with feathers, the most extraordinary figures; and the Queen complains that her garden has been destroyed and all her furniture broken by her polite visitors.

March 29.

So you like to hear of all our little doings, *so* I will tell you that, about eight o'clock, Fanny being by that time up and dressed, and at her little table, Harriet comes and reads to me Madame de Sevigné's letters, of which I never

tire; and I almost envy Fanny and Harriet the pleasure of reading them for the first time. After breakfast I take my little table into Lucy's room, and write there for an hour; she likes to have me in her room, though she only hears the scribble, scribble: she is generally reading at that hour, or doing Margaret's delight—algebra. I am doing the *Sequel to Frank.* Walking, reading, and talking fill the rest of the day. I do not read much, it tires my eyes, and I have not yet finished the *Life of Wesley:* I think it a most curious, entertaining, and instructive book. A *Life of Pitt* by the Bishop of Winchester is coming out: he wrote to Murray about it, who asked his friends, "Who is George Winton, who writes to me about publishing Pitt's *Life?*"

April 21.

Enclosed is a letter from our friend the American Jewess,[1] written in a spirit of Christian charity and kindness which it were to be wished that all Christians possessed. It has given me exquisite pleasure; and you know I never feel great pleasure without instantly wishing that you should share it. Lovell has asked this good Jewess and her *futur* to come here, if she should visit Europe. He is at home now, and kind as ever to every creature within reach of his benevolence.

We have been reading Fleury's *Memoirs of Napoleon.* Get it in French: it is very interesting, or we never could have got through it in the wretched translation to which we were doomed.

Tell Sophy that Peggy Tuite, who turned into Peggy Mulheeran, has had a dead child. When my mother said to her brother, "Do not let people crowd in and heat her

[1] Miss Mordecai of Richmond, on Maria's *Life* of her father.

room," "Oh, ma'am, sure I am standing at the door since three in the morning, sentinel, to keep them out," the tears dropping from his eyes fast on the ground as he spoke. And all the time the old *ould* mother Tuite (who doats on Mrs. Ruxton-dear) was sitting rocking herself to and fro, and "crying under the big laurel, that Peggy might not hear her."

You may all praise erysipelas as much as you please, but I never desire to see or feel it again. Our boy, Mick Duffy, has been ill with it these ten days. Honora said to his father, Brian, "How can you be so fond of Michael; now that he lives with us, you hardly ever see him!" "Oh, how could I but be fond of him, the crater that sends me every guinea he gets!"

July 8.

So Buonaparte is dead! and no change will be made in any country by the death of a man who once made such a figure in the world! He who commanded empires and sovereigns, a prisoner in an obscure island, disputing for a bottle of wine, subject to the petty tyranny of Sir Hudson Lowe! I regret that England permitted that trampling upon the fallen. What an excellent dialogue of the dead might be written between Buonaparte and Themistocles!

Ages ago I sent *Bracebridge Hall* to Merrion Street for you: have you got it? Next week another book will be there for you—an American novel Mrs. Griffith sent to me, *The Spy;* quite new scenes and characters, humour and pathos, a picture of America in Washington's time; a surgeon worthy of Smollett or Moore, and quite different from any of their various surgeons; and an Irishwoman, Betty Flanagan, incomparable.

August 3.

What do you think is my employment out of doors, and what it has been this week past? My garden? no such elegant thing; but making a gutter! a sewer and a pathway in the street of Edgeworthstown; and I do declare I am as much interested about it as I ever was in writing anything in my life. We have never here yet found it necessary to have recourse to public contribution for the poor, but it is necessary to give some assistance to the labouring class; and I find that making the said gutter and pathway will employ twenty men for three weeks.

Did you ever hear these two excellent *Tory* lines made by a celebrated *Whig*?

> As bees alighting upon flowerets cease to hum,
> So, settling upon places, Whigs grow dumb.

August 8.

We are all in the joy of Francis'[1] arrival: Pakenham at the tea-table has been standing beside him feeding him with red currants well sugared, and between every currant he told us, as well as he could, the history of his journey. "Talbot," Lord Talbot's son, who is his schoolfellow at the Charterhouse, was so kind as to go outside, that Francis might have an inside place at night. He met with so much good-nature from first to last in his journey, he wonders how people can be so good-natured.

Many of Maria Edgeworth's friends in England having invited her to visit them, she determined to spend the winter there, and set

[1] From Charterhouse; eldest son of the fourth Mrs. Edgeworth.

out in October with her former travelling companions, Fanny and Harriet, the two eldest daughters of the fourth Mrs. Edgeworth.

MARIA *to* MRS. EDGEWORTH.

KENIOGE, *Oct.* 23, 1821.

We have had a most delightful day, after sleeping well at Gwindu: we were in the carriage and off before the clock had finished striking six. In an interval of showers in a bright gleam of sunshine we passed Bangor Ferry: breakfasted nobly. Mr. Jackson, the old, old man, who some years ago was all pear-shaped stomach, and stupid, has wonderfully shrunk and revived, and is walking, alert and civil; and his fishy eyes brightened with pleasure on hearing of his friend, Mr. Lovell. Fine old waiter, a match in age and civility for the master; and a fine old dog, Twig, a match for both, and as saucy as Foster; for Mrs. Twig would not eat toast, unless buttered, forsooth!

Then on to Mrs. Worthington: excellent, motherly woman, the Mrs. Brinkley of the slate quarries. Her first question about you and William won my heart: she seemed so to have seen into you with that penetration of the heart, which is full as quick as that of the head, if there be any difference. She furnished us each with a pair of Devonshire clogs, that fitted each as if made for us; and as young Mr. Worthington was disappointed by a sore throat of the pleasure of accompanying us, he gave us a note to Mr. Williams at the Quarries; and good, dear Mrs. Williams, in her white gown and worked borders, trampoozed with us through the splish splash to all the yards, and with her master of the works showed us the saw-mills, and the mill for grinding flint, and for the china works.

Waiving the description of all this, I will not tell you of the quarries and the glaciers of slates, because I wish Harriet to write her own fresh account of her first impressions. I feel that she was even more pleased than I expected; and I rejoice that this first sight, which I had promised myself the pleasure of showing her, is secure.

This day's drive through Wales has been charming: a few showers, but always at the best time for us. I have at different times of my life seen Wales at all seasons of the year, and after all I prefer the autumn view of it. The withering red brown fern is a great addition of beauty on the white and gray rocks, and often so resembles the tint of autumn on beech trees, that you cannot at a distance tell ferns on the mountains from young plantations, touched by autumn colour.

We have just dined at this delightful inn, where you and Fanny slept in 1818, kept as I am sure you remember by two sisters with sweet, good-humoured countenances: most active, obliging people. I think the most discontented of travellers—old growling Smollett himself, if he could come from the grave in a fit of the gout—could not be discontented at this inn. Fanny, Harriet, and I have just determined that, if ever we are reduced to earn our bread, we will keep an inn like this.

Lest you should think that all the little sense I had is gone to nonsense, I must tell you that, during part of this day, we have been very wise. When there came ugly bits of the road, Harriet read out Humboldt's fifth volume; and I was charmed with it, and enjoyed it the more from the reflection that Lucy can share this pleasure with us. She has Humboldt, I hope; if not, pray get it for her. The account of the venomous flies which *mount guard* at different hours of the day is most curious. Humboldt is

the Shakespear of travellers; as much superior to other travellers as Shakespear is to other poets. He seems to have at once a *vue d'oiseau* of one half of the world, and a perfect recollection of the other half, so as to bring together from all parts of the earth, and from all times, observations on the largest scale, from which he draws the most ingenious and the most useful conclusions. I will write to Madame Gautier to beg Humboldt to send to me portraits of the insects which appear on the Orinoco at different hours of the day and night, by which the natives mark the hours: it will make a fine contrast to the Watch of Flora.

To Miss Honora Edgeworth.

Smethwick Grove, *Oct.* 25, 1821.

Here we are, my dear Honora, once more at the dear, hospitable Moilliets'; Emily making tea at the same well-furnished board, with her near-sighted, beautiful eyes picking her way among the cups.

We missed, by not arriving last night, a Frenchman who has been seventeen years learning to play on the flute, and cannot play, and who has been ten years learning to speak English, and yet told Mrs. Moilliet that he had a letter to Lord Porcelain, to whom his mother is related, meaning the Duke of Portland. He left this, determined to see the residence of "Lord Malbrouke." Mrs. Moilliet endeavoured to put him right, and to put the song, "Va-t-en Malbrouke" out of his head; but he quoted it with the authority of an old legend. "Blenheim," Mr. Moilliet told him, was the name of the Duke of Marlborough's place. "Ah, *oui*, yes; Blenheim, I know that is the inn." He would have "Malbrouke" as the name of the place.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

WYCOMBE ABBEY, *Oct.* 30, 1821.

We spent two days instead of one at Smethwick. Nothing could be kinder than the Moilliets were to us; nevertheless, as dearest friends must part, we parted from them, and had a delightful drive to Woodstock. Fanny and Harriet will tell you of Blenheim; they were pleased, and you may be sure I was happy. At Oxford by twelve: found letter from Lord Carrington—most punctual of men—appointing the 29th. But no letter from Mr. Russell: sent the porter with note to him: "Mr. Russell gone to see his brother at the Charter-house." Porter trudged again with two notes, one to Tom Beddoes[1]—"not come up this term:" another note to Mr. Biddulph—most civil and best of College cicerones—arrived almost as soon as the porter returned with his "very happy;" and he walked us about to all those halls and gardens which we had not seen before. Balliol and University gardens beautiful: at Corpus Christi beautiful altar-piece. Rested at Mr. Biddulph's most comfortable rooms at Maudlin: we went to Evening Service in the chapel: going in from daylight, chapel lighted with many candles: dim light through brown saints in the windows: chanting good, anthem very fine: two of the finest voices I ever heard, one of a young boy. Good tea at Tetsworth: amused ourselves next morning reading like ladies, and watching from our gazabo window the arrival and departure of twelve stage-coaches, any one of which would have been a study for Wilkie, besides the rubbing down of a horse with a besom: at first we thought the horse would have been affronted—no, quite agreeable. The dried flakes of yellow mud, first besomed and then

[1] Her nephew.

brushed, raised such a dust, that in the dust, man and horse were lost.

"Arrived here just at dressing-time. Lord Carrington had asked the Lushingtons and Dr. Holland—can't come. Count and Countess Ludolf expected to-morrow: he is ambassador from Sicily. Fanny says you and she met them at Lady Davy's.

To MRS. RUXTON.

WYCOMBE ABBEY, *Nov.* 2, 1821.

It is impossible to be kinder than Lord Carrington is to us: he wrote to invite everybody that he thought we should like to meet. We have had Mr. Wilberforce for several days, and I cannot tell you how glad I am to have seen him again, and to have had an opportunity of hearing his delightful conversation, and of seeing the extent and variety of his abilities. He is not at all anxious to show himself off; he converses, he does not merely talk. His thoughts flow in such abundance, and from so many sources, that they often cross one another; and sometimes a reporter would be quite at a loss. As he literally seems to speak all his thoughts as they occur, he produces what strikes him on both sides of any question. This often puzzles his hearers, but to me it is a proof of candour and sincerity; and it is both amusing and instructive to see him thus balancing accounts aloud. He is very lively, and full of odd contortions: no matter. His indulgent, benevolent temper strikes me particularly: he makes no pretension to superior sanctity or strictness. He spoke with much respect and tenderness for my feelings, of my father, and of the Life.

We have had, besides, Mr. Manning and his son, very

unaffected and agreeable; and Mr. Abel Smith, a nephew of Lord Carrington's; and Mr. Hales, an old bachelor diplomatist, who told me the name which the Abbé de Pradt gave to Buonaparte—Jupiter-Scapin. Does not this name contain a volume?

To MISS LUCY EDGEWORTH.

WYCOMBE ABBEY, *Nov.* 4, 1821.

GOD bless Mr. King! My dear Lucy, we have the best hopes now that your admirable patience and fortitude will be rewarded, and soon. We regretted the three-quarters of an hour Mr. King might have spent with you which were wasted at the coach office, but these are among the *minnikin* miseries of human life. You must often wonder how people in health, and out of pain, and with the use of their limbs and all their locomotive faculties, can complain of anything. But man is a grumbling animal, not woman.

We are reading Madame de Staël's *Dix Années d'Exil* with delight. Though there may be too much egotism, yet it is extremely interesting; and though she repeats too often, and uses too many words, yet there are so many brilliant passages, and things which no one but herself could have thought or said, that it will last as long as the memory of Buonaparte lasts on earth. Pray get it and read it; not the plays or poetry which make up the last volume —why will *friends* publish all the trash they can scrape together of celebrated people?

Mr. Hales, my dry diplomatist, tells me that Madame de Staël, he was assured by the Swedish minister, provoked Buonaparte, by intriguing to set Bernadotte on the throne of France, and that letters of hers on this subject were intercepted. You will not care much about this, but you

may tell it to some of your visitants, who will be in due time as full of Madame de Staël's *Dix Années d'Exil* as I am at this moment.

Here is an old distich which my dry diplomatist came out with yesterday at dinner, on the ancestor of Hampden. The remains of the Hampden estate are in this neighbourhood, and as we were speaking of our wish to see the place in which the patriot lived, Mr. Hales observed that it is curious how the spirit of dislike to kings had run in the blood of the Hampdens some centuries before Charles' time: they lost three manors in this county, forfeit for a Hampden having struck the Black Prince.

> Tring, Wing, and Ivanhoe,
> Old Hampden did forego,
> For striking the Black Prince a blow.

When this is read you will say he deserved to lose three manors for striking such a Prince.

Besides two spacious bed-chambers and a dressing-room, munificent Lord Carrington would insist upon our having a sitting-room to ourselves, and we have one that is delightful: windows down to the ground, and prospect — dark woods and river, so pretty that I can scarcely mind what I am saying to you.

Yesterday arrived a Mr. Hay, very well informed about mummies and Egypt, talks well, and as if he lived with all the learned and all the fashionable in London: his account of the unrolling of a mummy which he lately saw in London was most entertaining. All the folds of the thinnest linen which were unwound were laid more smoothly and dextrously, as the best London surgeons declared, than they can now apply bandages: they stood in amazement. The skin was quite tough, the flesh perfect: the face quite

preserved, except the bridge of the nose, which had fallen in. Count Ludolf, who has been a fine painter in his day, says he has used mummy pitch, or whatever it is in which mummies are preserved, as a fine brown paint, like bistre, "only bitter to the taste when one sucks one's brush."

Mr. Hay, I find, is private secretary to Lord Melville. It is too much to have a Mr. *Hales* and a Mr. *Hay*.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

GATCOMBE PARK, *Nov.* 9, 1821.

We arrived here on Wednesday evening to tea—beautiful moonlight night. At the gate, the first operation was to lock the wheel, and we went down, down a hill not knowing where it would end or when the house would appear; that it was a beautiful place was clear even by moonlight. Hall with lights very cheerful—servants on the steps. Mr. Ricardo very glad to see us. Mrs. Ricardo brilliant eyes and such cordial open-hearted benevolence of manner, no affectation, no thought about herself.[1] "My daughter-in-law, Mrs. Osman Ricardo," a beautiful tall figure, and fine face, fair, and a profusion of light hair. Mr. Ricardo, jun., and two young daughters, Mary, about fifteen, handsome, and a child of ten, Bertha, beautiful.

I was frightened about Fanny, tired and giddy after the journey; however, her first answer in the morning, "much better," set my heart at ease. A very fine day, all cheerful, a delightfully pleasant house, with uphill and downhill wooded views from every window. Rides and drives pro-

[1] David Ricardo (1772-1823), long M.P. for Portarlington, a great speaker and writer on Political Economy. He married Catherine, daughter of W. T. St. Quentin of Seampston Hall, York.

posed. I asked to see a cloth manufactory in the neighbourhood. Mrs. Osman Ricardo offered her horse to Fanny, and Mr. Osman rode with her. Mr. Ricardo drove me in his nice safe and comfortable phaeton; Harriet and Mrs. Osman in the seat behind. The horses pretty and strong, and, moreover, quiet, so that though we drove up and down hills almost perpendicular, and along a sort of *Rodborough Siemplon*, I was not in the least alarmed. Mr. Ricardo is laughed at, as they tell me, for his driving, but I prefer it to more dashing driving. Sidney Smith, who was here lately, said, that "a new surgeon had set up in Minchin Hampton since Mr. Ricardo has taken to driving."

We had delightful conversation, both on deep and shallow subjects. Mr. Ricardo, with a very composed manner, has a continual life of mind, and starts perpetually new game in conversation. I never argued or discussed a question with any person who argues more fairly or less for victory and more for truth. He gives full weight to every argument brought against him, and seems not to be on any side of the question for one instant longer than the conviction of his mind on that side. It seems quite indifferent to him whether you find the truth, or whether he finds it, provided it be found. One gets at something by conversing with him; one learns either that one is wrong or that one is right, and the understanding is improved without the temper being ever tried in the discussion; but I must come to an end of this letter. Harriet has written to Pakenham an account of the cloth manufactory which Mr. Stephens explained admirably, and we are going out to see Mrs. Ricardo's school; she has 130 children there, and takes as much pains as Lovell.

Nov. 10.

Yesterday evening a Mr. and Miss Strachey dined here: he pleasing, and she with a nice pretty-shaped small head like Honora's, very agreeable voice. Mr. and Mrs. Smith of Easton Grey had come, and there was a great deal of agreeable conversation. An English bull was mentioned: Lord Camden put the following advertisement in the papers: — "Owing to the distress of the times Lord Camden will not shoot himself or any of his tenants before the 4th of October next."

Much conversation about cases of conscience, whether Scott was right to deny his novels? Then the Effie Deans question, and much about smugglers. Lord Carrington says all ladies are born smugglers. Lady Carrington once staying on the coast of Devonshire wrote to Lord Carrington that his butler had got from a wreck a pipe of wine for £36, and that it was in her cellar. "Now," said Lord Carrington to himself, "here am I in the king's service; can I permit such a thing? No." He wrote to the proper excise officers and gave them notice, and by the same post to Lady Carrington, but he did not know that taking goods from a wreck was a felony. As pale as death the butler came to Lady Carrington. "I must fly for it, my lady, to America." They were thrown into consternation; at last they staved the wine, so that when the excise officers came nothing was to be found. Lord Carrington of course lost his £36 and saved his honour. Mr. Ricardo said he might have done better by writing to apprise the owners of the vessel that he was ready to pay a fair price for it, and the duties.

To MISS LUCY EDGEWORTH.

GATCOMBE PARK, *Nov.* 12.

We are perfectly happy here; delightful house and place for walking, riding, driving. Fanny has a horse always at her command. I a phaeton and Mr. Ricardo to converse with. He is altogether one of the most agreeable persons, as well as the best informed and most clever, that I ever knew. My own pleasure is infinitely increased by seeing that Fanny and Harriet are so much liked and so very happy here.

In the evenings, in the intervals of good conversation, we have all sorts of merry plays. Why, when and where: our words were—*Jack*, *Bar*, *Belle*, *Caste*, *Plum*, the best.

We acted charades last night. *Pillion* excellent. Maria, Fanny, and Harriet, little dear, pretty Bertha, and Mr. Smith, the best hand and head at these diversions imaginable. First we entered swallowing pills with great choking: *bill*. Next on all-fours, roaring *lions;* Fanny and Harriet's roaring devouring lions much clapped. Next Bertha riding on Mr. Smith's back. *Pillion.*

Coxcomb. — Mr. Smith, Mr. Ricardo, Fanny, Harriet, and Maria *crowing*. Ditto, ditto, *combing* hair. Mr. Ricardo, solus strutting, a *coxcomb*, very droll.

Sinecure.—Not a good one.

Monkey.—Very good. Mr. Ricardo and Mr. Smith as *monks*, with coloured silk handkerchiefs, as cowls, a laughable solemn procession. Re-enter with *keys*. Mr. Ricardo as *monkey*.

Fortune-tellers.—The best: Fanny as Fortune; unluckily we forgot to blind her, and she had only my leather bag for her purse, but nevertheless, she made a beautiful graceful *Fortune*, and scattered her riches with an air that

charmed the world. 2nd scene: Mr. Smith and Harriet *tellers* of the house—"the ayes have it." Fanny, Maria, and Harriet, *fortune-tellers;* much approved.

Love-sick.—Bertha, with a bow made by Mr. Smith in an instant, with a switch and red tape and a long feathered pen. Bertha was properly blind and made an irresistible Cupid; she entered and shot, and all the company fell: *Love.* 2nd: Harriet, Mr. Smith, and Maria, all very *sick.* 3rd: Fanny, a *love-sick* young lady. Maria, her duenna, scolding, and pitying, and nursing her with a smelling bottle.

Fire-eater.—1st: Harriet and I acted alarm of *fire,* and alarmed Mr. Ricardo so well—he was going to call for assistance. 2nd: I was an epicure, and *eating* always succeeds on the stage. 3rd: Harriet devoured lighted spills to admiration, and only burnt her lip a little.

In "conundrum," Mrs. Osman was a beautiful nun; she is a charming creature, most winning countenance and manner, very desirous to improve herself, and with an understanding the extent and excellence of which I did not at first estimate.

To MRS. RUXTON.

EASTON GREY, *Nov.* 22, 1821.

Lady Catherine Bisset came with her two little nieces to call upon us, and Fanny won little Lady Mary-Rose's heart, partly by means of some Madeira and Portuguese figures from the chimney-piece, which she ranged on the table for her amusement, and partly by a whiz-gig, which Fanny plays to admiration.

And what is a whiz-gig? If you do not know, you must wait till I send you one.

Lady Catherine, when no one was seeing or looking, laid her hand on my arm most affectionately, and looking up in my face, said, "Do you know I have been half my life trying to be your good French governess. I love her."

We went to see her at her cottage, near her brother, Lord Suffolk's, and saw many curiosities from Ceylon, made entertaining to us by the comments and anecdotes of Captain Fenwick, who had been years at Ceylon. On our return we stopped to see Malmesbury Abbey—beautifully placed; the height of the arch sublime.

BOWOOD, *Nov.* 26.

We were fortunate enough to find Lord and Lady Lansdowne just returned from their tour. They looked at the Pyrenees, but they could not go into Spain, for the yellow fever rages there. A cordon of troops prevent any travellers who might be disposed to brave the danger of the fever, and fire if any attempt is made to pass. Lady Lansdowne would quite satisfy you by her love of the Italian women. Here are Miss Vernon, and Miss Fox, Lord Holland's sister, and Miss Fox, Lord Holland's daughter, and Mr. Ogden, the widower of that beautiful and extraordinary lady whom we met here three years ago. He has a great deal of cool, grave, gentlemanly humour, and has been amusing us with an account of his visit to Bowles, the poet, yesterday, and his musical sheep-bells and his susceptibility to criticism and his credulity. He wrote with all the simplicity of egotism to Murray to desire him, whenever any one who came into his shop was seen to look into the review of his controversy with Lord Byron on Pope, to pop into his hand his pamphlet by way of antidote.

Miss Vernon and Miss Fox are both very agreeable,

and Miss Fox,[1] the young lady, beautiful, timid, and charming.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

MALL, CLIFTON, *Dec.* 3, 1821.

Our visit here and its object have been happily accomplished, my dear mother, for my sister and Mr. King seem quite pleased and gratified. Emmeline looks and is in much better health than when I was here before. I must go to breakfast now as the carriage is to be at the door to carry us to see Mr. Miles's pictures.

CIRENCESTER, *Dec.* 5.

Our picture day at Leigh Court surpassed our expectations. Poussin's famous "Land Storm;" "St. John," by Domenichino, the most striking, with a divine head of our SAVIOUR, by Leonardo da Vinci, and many others too tantalising to mention. Mr. King, Emmeline, Mr. Elton, and ourselves, filled the coach. Mr. King in high spirits, talked all the way there and back, and was exceedingly entertaining and instructive. He has great variety of tastes and acquirements, and we were delighted to hear him.

There was a large party the last night at Clifton, and I heard one new thing, a great deal to hear at one party. This new thing I shall keep for Pakenham; I wakened this morning with an intention of getting up remarkably early to write it for him, and I got up thinking myself a miracle of virtue and peep-o'-day woman; but lo! and behold, it was just nine o'clock. Good-bye to Pakenham and the Deadman's head, of which my own was full two

[1] Mary Elizabeth, who married, 1830, the third Lord Lilford.

seconds before; all that could be done was to scuffle about the room and rummage the imperials for gowns, frills, shoes, and gloves; all happily found, and on the right owners, and looking charmingly, ma'am, by breakfast time. Fanny and Harriet in their lilac and maroon tabinets. I am now writing in a delightful armchair, high-backed antiquity, and modern cushions. Company at dinner yesterday—Lord and Lady Bathurst, Lord Apsley, Mr. William Bathurst, Lady Georgiana, Lady Emily, Lady Georgiana Lennox, Major Colebrook, and Mr. Fortescue, whom we met at Paris, very agreeable, "melancholy and gentlemanlike." The conversation goes on here remarkably well: Lady Bathurst is perfectly well-bred and easy; Lord Apsley and Lady Georgiana very agreeable.

The Duchess of Beaufort's French governess published in 1817 a story called *Valoe*, which threw all high-bred London into confusion. Everybody, who is anybody in it, under feigned names, the picture of all the persons, manners, and character of all the young ladies who are supposed to file off before the Duke of Devonshire. No wit, but tittle-tattle truths. You can't buy the book if you were to give your eyes for it: all bought up by the Duchess of Beaufort.[1] Lord Apsley, who has a copy with all the names in it, lent it to me. Fanny had a pleasant ride this morning with Lord Bathurst, Mr. Fortescue, Major Colebrook, and Mr. Bathurst, who all returned charmed with her manner of riding, and she with her ride. Harriet and I had driven out with Lady Bathurst and Lady Georgiana—a delightful drive through this magnificent park. The meeting of the pine avenues in a star—superb. "Who plants like Bathurst?" etc. We saw

[1] It was written by a governess whom she had dismissed.

Pope's seat, and "Cotswold's wild and Saperton's fair dale"—a most beautiful dale it is.

News from the best authority; probably it will be in the newspapers before you see this: Lord Wellesley is to be lord-lieutenant, and Mr. Goulburn, secretary.

To MISS HONORA EDGEWORTH.

WINCHESTER, *Dec.* 12, 1821.

Lest you should be staying in Dublin, I write this epitome to tell you what we have done. We spent two days at Cirencester, very entertaining. Delightful woods.

Friday to Dr. Fowler's, Salisbury, and stayed till to-day after breakfast; our four days deliciously spent. We have seen Salisbury Cathedral, and Wilton, pictures, and statues, and Lady Pembroke and her children, worth them all.

We were at Longford Castle yesterday; the strangest castle in the world. Finest private collection of pictures I have seen, or at least that in which there are the fewest indifferent ones.

We have seen Stonehenge! and spend to-morrow with Mrs. Moutray at Mr. Coxe's, Twyford.

THE DEEPDENE, *Dec.* 19.

We arrived here on Saturday. The first day there were Lady Mary Bennet, Miss Burrowes, and Prince Cariati, a banished Neapolitan, in very long-skirted coat, which he holds up by tucking one hand inside behind; good-humoured, and plays all sorts of *petits jeux*. Mrs. Hope has recovered her beauty, and she and Mr. Hope are as kind as ever, and asked affectionately after you, and so did Henry.

Mrs. Hogan, excellent Mrs. Hogan, has grown much older, but in all other respects the same, and next to our own dear Mrs. Billamore the most active and attached person in her station I ever saw. But why waste my time on housekeepers, when I should tell you of Lord Burford and his sisters, Lady Maria and Lady Caroline Beauclerc, who arrived on Monday, and Lady Westmeath and Mr. Smith (*Rejected Addresses*), and Mr. Lock, son of Norbury Park Lock: all *come* to *go* to a ball at Dorking, of which Mr. Hope is one of the stewards.

The Lady Beauclercs are beautiful, in the Vandyke style, and Lord Burford very handsome, and so is Mr. Lock, with a curly head.

Fanny danced a great deal, and Harriet two quadrilles and Sir Roger de Coverley, which ended at six in the morning. We met at this ball Mr. Greenough, and Mr. Angerstein, Sneyd's friend, very agreeable, and Mrs. Hibbert, of the beautiful cottage, and Lady Rothes. Mr. Smith excessively entertaining; he sings humorous songs of his own composition inimitably. Alas! he went away yesterday.

The evening after the ball they played at "the ring," a ring held on a string in a circle, and the fool in the middle seeks and challenges any suspected hand. This morning, the moment breakfast was over, they went into the *hall of the marble table*, and there played at *petits pacquets* (not time to describe), a great deal of running and laughing among pretty men and pretty maids.

As I stood at the window with Mr. Hope looking at a ring of company playing French blindman's-buff, we agreed we had never seen more beauty, male and female, collected in a circle of fourteen persons.

Mrs. Hogan has just announced the arrival of "Prince

Cimitelli, and another name, ma'am, which I am ashamed to say I can never *twist out* rightly, is to come here to-day."

Mr. Smith told Fanny that he had intended to put me into the *Rejected Addresses*, and had written a part in the character of an Irish labourer, but it was so flat he threw it aside.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

FROGNEL, HAMPSTEAD, *Dec.* 29, 1821.

We read—I mean we have heard read by Mr. Carr, who reads admirably, half the first volume of the *Pirate*, stopped at the chapter ending with the description of Norma of the Fitful Head. We were much pleased and interested, especially with the beautiful description of Mordaunt's education and employments: the sea-monsters, etc., most poetical, in Scott's master style: the manner in which, by scarcely perceptible touches, he wakens the reader's interest for his hero, admirable, unequalled by all but Shakespear. Wonderful genius; who can raise an interest even on the barren rocks of Zetland. Aladdin could only raise palaces at will, but the mighty master Scott can transport us to the most remote desert corner of the earth, ay, and keep us there, and make us wish to stay among beings of his own creation. I send a sketch of the room, and how we all sat last night as happy as possible listening to Mr. Carr reading; show this ground-plan to Honora, who knows the room, and she will *insense* you.

To MRS. RUXTON.

FROGNEL, HAMPSTEAD, *Jan.* 2, 1822.

We have been enjoying in this family every delight which affection and cultivated tastes, and cheerful tempers

can bestow. Upon nearer acquaintance I find Dr. Lushington worthy of the prize he has obtained in a wife,[1] and I have heard from friends, who differ from him in political opinions, such honourable testimony to his integrity and strength of mind that my heart is quite at ease about her happiness.

To MISS RUXTON.

FROGNEL, *Jan.* 3, 1822.

I believe I left off where I had mentioned the *Pirate*, which I hope you are reading to my aunt. The characters of the two sisters are beautiful. The idea of Brenda not believing in supernatural agency, and yet being afraid, and Minna not being afraid though she believes in Norma's power, is new and natural and ingenious. This was Joanna Baillie's idea. The picture of the sisters sleeping and the lacing scene is excellent, and there are not only passages of beautiful picturesque description, but many more deep philosophical reflections upon the human mind, and the causes of human happiness, than in any of his other works. The satire upon agriculturists imported from one country to another, who set to work to improve the land and the habits of the people without being acquainted with the circumstances of either, is excellent. I am sure my uncle will like and laugh with Magnus Troil. It is wonderful how genius can make even barren Zetland fertile in novelty. Both Morton and Tom Carr are very amiable and both handsome. Tom dark, like an Italian portrait; Morton fair, with light hair and quick-colouring with every emotion: a high sense of honour, chivalrous sentiments, and delicacy of taste.

[1] Miss Edgeworth's old friend, Miss Sarah Carr.

New Year's Day was Mr. and Mrs. Carr's wedding day, and it was kept as it always is, with family rejoicings; Dr. Holland, as he has done for many years, and Joanna Baillie and Miss Mulso, an intimate friend, a niece of Mrs. Chapone's, dined here, which, with the whole family and ourselves, made a party of twenty. Mr. Carr gave many toasts; some so affectionate they made the tears roll down the cheeks of his children. In the evening there was a merry dance, in which Joanna and her sister joined, and then as agreed upon, at a given signal, we all ran up to our rooms and dressed in different characters. We did not know what the others were to be, but Fanny was a nun in a white muslin veil and drapery over her black gown—dressed in a moment, and I fell to decking Harriet, a pert travelled young lady just returned from Paris, in the height of the fashion: feathers of all colours, gold diadem, a profusion of artificial flowers, a nosegay of vast size, rose-coloured gauze dress, darkened eyebrows, and ringlets of dark hair which so completely altered her that no creature guessed who she was till Mrs. Carr at last knew her by her likeness to her mother; she supported her character with great spirit. I was an Irish nurse in a red cloak, come all the way from Killogonsawee, "for my two childer that left me last year for foreign parts." Little Francis was Triptolemus, in the *Pirate*, an excellent figure, and Mrs. Carr his sister Baby. Isabella, an old lady in an old-fashioned dress, and Laura as her daughter in a court dress and powder; Anna, a French troubadour singing beautifully and speaking French perfectly; William, the youngest son, a half-pay officer, king of the coffee house; Tom, a famous London black beggar, Billy Waters, with a wooden leg; Morton, Meg Merillies; Dr. Lushington, a housemaid; Miss Mulso, an English ballad singer; Mr. Burrell (I forgot

to mention him, an old family friend at dinner) as a Spanish gentleman, Don Pedro Velasquez de Tordesillas; very good ruff and feathers, but much wanting a sword when the wooden-legged black trod on his toes. In the scuffle of dressing, for which only ten minutes were allowed, no sword could be found. From the quickness of preparation, and our all being a family party, this little masquerade went off remarkably well, and was very diverting to the persons concerned.

I heard yesterday from a friend of Lady Lansdowne's that Miss Kitty Malone has had the operation performed upon her eye; saw the ring on Alexander's finger, and exclaimed, "How happy you must be, sir, who can give sight to the blind!"

To Miss Lucy Edgeworth.

Miss Baillie's, Hampstead, *Jan.* 12, 1822.

I have been four days resolving to get up half an hour earlier that I might have time to tell you, my dear Lucy, the history of a cat of Joanna and Agnes Baillie's.

You may, perhaps, have heard the name of a celebrated Mr. Brodie, who wrote on Poisons, and whose papers on this subject are to be found in the *Transactions of the Royal Society*, and reviewed in the *Edinburgh Review*, in 1811. He brought some of the Woorara poison, with which the natives poison their arrows and destroy their victims. It was his theory that this poison destroys by affecting the nervous system only, and that after a certain time its effects on the nerves would cease as the effects of intoxicating liquors cease, and that the patient might recover, if the lungs could be kept in play, if respiration were not suspended during the trance or partial death in which the

patient lies. To prove the truth of this by experiment he fell to work upon a cat; he pricked the cat with the point of a lancet dipped in Woorara. It was some minutes before the animal became convulsed, and then it lay, to all appearance, dead. Mr. Brodie applied a tube to its mouth, and blew air into it from time to time; after lying some hours apparently lifeless it recovered, shook itself and went about its own affairs as usual. This was tried several times, much to the satisfaction of the philosophical spectators, but not quite to the satisfaction of poor puss, who grew very thin and looked so wretched that Dr. Baillie's son, then a boy, took compassion on this poor subject of experiment, and begged Mr. Brodie would let him carry off the cat. With or without consent, he did carry her off, and brought her to his aunts, Joanna and Agnes Baillie. Then puss's prosperous days began. Agnes made a soft bed for her in her own room, and by night and day she was the happiest of cats; she was called Woorara, which in time shortened into Woory. I wish I could wind up Woory's history by assuring you that she was the most attached and grateful of cats, but truth forbids. A few weeks after her arrival at Hampstead she marched off and never was heard of more. It is supposed that she took to evil courses: tasted the blood and bones of her neighbours' chickens, and fell at last a sacrifice to the vengeance of a cook-maid.

After this cat's departure Agnes took to heart a kitten, who was very fond of her. This kitten, the first night she slept in her room, on wakening in the morning looked up from the hearth at Agnes, who was lying awake, but with her eyes half-shut, and marked all puss's motions; after looking some instants, puss jumped up on the bed, crept softly forward and put her paw, with its glove on, upon one

of Miss Baillie's eyelids and pushed it gently up; Miss Baillie looked at her fixedly, and puss, as if satisfied that her eyes were *there* and safe, went back to her station on the hearth and never troubled herself more about the matter.

To finish this chapter of cats. I saw yesterday at a lady's house at Hampstead, a real Persian cat, brought over by a Navy Captain, her brother. It has long hair like a dog, and a tail like a terrier's, only with longer hair. It is the most gentle, depressed-looking creature I ever saw; it seems to have the *mal du pays*, and moreover, had the cholic the morning I saw it, and Agnes Baillie had a spoonful of castor oil poured out for it, but it ran away.

Joanna quoted to me the other day an excellent proverb applied to health: "Let well alone." If the Italian valetudinarian had done this his epitaph would not have arrived at the *sto qui*.

Captain Beaufort tells me that they have found out that the wool under the buffalo's long hair is finer than the material of which the Cashmere shawls are made, and they are going to manufacture shawls of buffalo's wool, which are to shame and silence the looms of Cashmere. Would my mother choose to wait for one of these?

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

HAMPSTEAD, *Jan.* 14, 1822.

We are come to our last morning at this hospitable house. Most affectionate hospitality has been shown to us by these two excellent sisters. I part with Agnes and Joanna Baillie, confirmed in my opinion that the one is the most amiable literary woman I ever beheld, and the other one of the best informed and most useful. I wish you had seen

Joanna and Agnes each evening laying Fanny's feet up on the sofa, spreading their bright *Stuart* plaid over her, and a silk handkerchief hooded over her head so comfortable and so pretty, as Joanna said, she looked like one of Guido's pictures.

An hour after I had read your letter, arrived the gentleman who franks this letter,[1] one of the most sensible, well-bred conversers I ever heard. He began by giving us an account of all Lord Wellesley has been doing in Ireland, and entertained us for three hours with anecdotes of Fox and Mrs. Fox, and Lord Grenville, with whom he has been staying at Dropmore. He said that when he first went there and heard there was no company in the house, he was frightened out of his wits at the idea of a *tête-à-tête* with silent Lord Grenville; but to his astonishment, he found him *tête-à-tête* the most communicative and talkative of men; he had only to ask him what he pleased to set him off delightfully, like the Primate; those who can venture to talk to him freely, please him, and conquer his constitutional bashfulness. At breakfast he has three or four spaniels jumping upon him, he feeding, and protecting from them the newspaper, which he is reading all the time. He is remarkably fond of children. Mr. Abercromby saw him with two little boys, sons of a friend, and all the morning he was diverting them in the library, hunting for entertaining books and pictures for them. Such a new idea of Lord Grenville!

SIR JOHN SEBRIGHT'S,
BEECHWOOD PARK, *Jan.* 16.

A very fine park it is, with magnificently large beech trees, which well deserve to give their name to the place.

[1] Mr. Abercromby—Lord Dunfermline.

The house, a fine-looking house, was a convent in the days of Edward VI. Library forty feet long; books in open shelves, handsome and comfortable. Dr. Wollaston kindly recognised Fanny. Mrs. Marcet—we were glad to secure her. Mrs. Somerville — little, slightly made; fair hair, pink colour; small gray, round, intelligent, smiling eyes; very pleasing countenance; remarkably soft voice, strong, but well-bred Scotch accent; timid, not disqualifying timid, but naturally modest, yet with a degree of self-possession through it, which prevents her being in the least awkward, and gives her all the advantage of her understanding; at the same time, that it adds a prepossessing charm to her manner, and takes off all dread of her superior scientific learning.

To MISS RUXTON.

BEECHWOOD PARK, *Jan.* 17, 1822.

I have this moment heard an anecdote, which proves beyond a doubt — if any doubt remained — that Walter Scott is the author of the novels. He edited *The Memorie of the Somervilles*, and in the MS. copy are his marks of what was to be omitted; and among these what suggested to him the idea of Lady Margaret and the famous *dis*jeune which His Majesty did her the honour to take with her—continually referred to by an ancestor of Lord Somerville's.

We have spent two days pleasantly here with Dr. Wollaston, Dr. and Mrs. Somerville, Mr. Giles, and Mr. Franks, besides our own dear friend, Mrs. Marcet. Mrs. Somerville is the lady whom La Place mentions as the only woman in England who understands his works. She draws beautifully; and while her head is among the stars, her feet are firm upon the earth. Sir John Sebright him-

self is very entertaining—quite a new character: he amused me incessantly: strong head, and warm heart, and oddity enough for ten. He showed us his pigeons, one which he said he would not part with for a hundred guineas; he took it up in his hands to show me its pretty white head, but I could not see the difference between it and one not worth ten shillings. The pouting pigeons, who have *goîtres*, as Mrs. Marcet said, are frightful; they put in their heads behind these bags of wind, and strut about as if proud of deformity. We saw four Antwerp pigeons, one of which went, Sir John told us, from Tower Hill to Antwerp in six hours.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

MARDOAKS, *Jan.* 19, 1822.

We called at Hatfield on our way here: a fine pile of old house with many pictures—Burleigh, Cecil, Leicester, and Elizabeth. Do you remember meeting Lady Salisbury[1] at Lady Darnley's? little, lively, good-humoured, very alert and active. What do you think of her fox-hunting, though past seventy? Mr. Franks and Mr. Giles, whom we met at Beechwood, and all the young men, declare that she is more lively and good-humoured out hunting than any of them. An old groom goes out with her on a hunter a little better than her own, always a little before her, to show her where she may go, and turns to her every now and then, "Come on! why the d—l don't you leap?" or "You must not go there! why the d—l do you go there?"

[1] Amelia, daughter of the first Marquis of Downshire, and wife of the first Marquis of Salisbury. She was burnt to death in Hatfield House, 27th November 1835.

We arrived here in our usual happy time—firelight, an hour before dinner: most cordially received both by Sir James and Lady Macintosh: house pretty, library comfortable, hall and staircase beautiful: house filled with books.

I must tell you an anecdote of Wilberforce and a dream of Dr. Wollaston's. Mr. Wilberforce, you know, sold his house at Kensington Gore: the purchaser was a Chinaman, or, I should say, the keeper of a china-shop in Oxford Street—Mr. Mortlock. When the purchase-money was paid, £10,000, and the deeds executed, Mr. Mortlock waited upon Mr. Wilberforce, and said, "This house suits you, Mr. Wilberforce, so well in every respect, that I am sure your only motive in parting with it is to raise the money: therefore permit me to return these title-deeds. Accept this testimony of esteem, due to your public character and talents."

Wilberforce did not accept this handsome offer.

Dr. Wollaston told us that he was much pleased with his own ingenuity in a dream. He wished to weigh himself, but suddenly fell, and was hurried forward on the ground till he came to a spot where the power of gravity ceased to act. He bethought himself of a spring steelyard, and with the joy of successful invention, wakened. Sir John Sebright, however, would not allow Wollaston to be proud of this, as it would have occurred to him, or any one acquainted with the principle of a steelyard. We argued this point for a quarter of an hour, and each went away, as usual, of his or her original opinion.

HERTFORD COLLEGE, *Jan.* 23.

Do you recollect a Cornish friend of Davy's who supped with him the night when Lady Darnley and the Russian

Prince and the Sneyds were there? and Davy saying that this Cornish friend was a very clever man, and that he was anxious to do him honour, and be kind? This Cornish friend was Mr., now Dr. Batten, at the head of Hertford College. He had with him a rosy-cheeked, happy-looking, open-faced son, of nine years old, whom we liked much, and whose countenance and manner gave the best evidence possible in favour of father and mother.

Le Bas is as deaf as a post; but that is no matter, as he is professor of mathematics, and deals only in demonstration. He has a very good-natured, intelligent countenance. He laughed heartily at some nonsense of mine which caught his ear, and that broke the mournful gravity of his countenance.

Fanny had some rides with little Macintosh while at Mardoaks—Robert, a very intelligent boy of fifteen, little for his age; like his father, but handsomer, and he listens to his conversation with a delight which proves him worthy to be the son of such a father, and promises future excellence better than anything he could say at his age. Sir James is improved in the art of conversation since we knew him; being engaged in great affairs with great men and great women has perfected him in the use and management of his wonderful natural powers and vast accumulated treasures of knowledge. His memory now appears to work less; his eloquence is more easy, his wit more brilliant, his anecdotes more happily introduced. Altogether his conversation is even more delightful than formerly; superior to Dumont's in imagination, and almost equal in wit. In Dumont's mind and conversation, wit and reason are kept separate; but in Macintosh they are mixed, and he uses both in argument, knowing the full value and force of each: never attempting to pass wit for logic, he forges

each link of the chain of demonstration, and then sends the electric spark of wit through it. The French may well exclaim, in speaking of him, "Quelle abondance!"

He told us that, at Berlin, just before a dinner at which were all the principal ambassadors of Europe, Madame de Staël, who had been invited to meet them, turned to a picture of Buonaparte, then at the height of his power, and addressed it with Voltaire's lines to Cupid:

> Qui que ce soit, voici ton maître,
> Il est, le fut, ou le doit être.

Fanny and Harriet say that Macintosh has far surpassed their expectations. The two new persons Fanny wished most to see in England were Ricardo and Macintosh: she has seen them in the best possible manner, in their own families, at leisure not only to be wise and good, but agreeable. Harriet and she have heard more of their conversation than they could in a whole season in London. Think how happy I must feel in seeing them quite satisfied. Sir James and Lady Macintosh seem to like them, and I and they delight in Miss Macintosh: she is one of the best-informed and most unaffected girls I ever knew, with a sweet voice and agreeable conversation.

GROVE HOUSE, KENSINGTON,
Jan. 27, 1822.

As if wakening from a long dream, I find myself sitting in exactly the same corner, on the same chair, in the same room where Fanny, and Honora, and I were three years ago! Lady Elizabeth Whitbread[1] looks better than she did when we left her, though much thinner: her kindness and the winning dignity of her manners the same as

[1] Eldest daughter of the first Earl Grey.

ever. She was at breakfast with us at half-past nine this morning, when she went to her church and we to Kensington—Mrs. Batty's pew—Harriet and I. Fanny stayed at home for the good of her body, and Lady Elizabeth left with her, for the good of her soul, that wicked *Cain*.[1]

Miss Grant will be here on Monday, absent a fortnight nursing Mrs. Nesbitt. A new dog, Jubal: Lady Elizabeth heard one of the little Battys say, "Lion has *hatched* a new dog," and the sister correcting her, "Oh, my dear! *hatched!* you mean *laid!*" Jubal is very like Lion, only younger and handsomer: milk-white, and shorn poodle fashion.

To MRS. RUXTON.

GROVE HOUSE, *Feb.* 1822.

I am glad you like the preface to *Frank:* the engineer and the scientific part will tire you—skip and go on to the third volume. Delightful breakfast to-day at Mr. Ricardo's. We have this last week seen all Calcott's principal pictures, and those by Mulready, an Irish artist: one of a messenger playing truant; the enraged mistress, and the faces of the boys he is playing with, and the little child he had the care of asleep, all tell their story well; but none of these come near the exquisite humour and ingenuity of Hogarth. I have the face of that imbecile, round-eyed, half-drunk friend of ours in the corner of the "Election Dinner" now before me, and I can never think of it without laughing.

We have seen Sir Thomas Lawrence's magnificent

[1] Lord Byron's *Cain*, which was preached against in Kensington Church by Mr. Rennel.

picture of the King in his coronation robes, which is to be sent to the Pope.[1] He flatters with great skill, choosing every creature's best. An admirable picture of Walter Scott; ditto ditto of Lady Jersey and Lady Conyngham. Lord Anglesea came in while we were with Sir Thomas: he is no longer handsome, but a model for the "nice conduct" of a wooden leg. It was within an inch of running through Walter Scott's picture, which was on the floor leaning on the wall; but, by a skilful sidelong manœuvre, he bowed out of its way. His gray hair looks much better than His Majesty's flaxen wig—bad taste.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

KENSINGTON GORE, *Feb.* 6, 1822.

A dreadful storm two nights ago, which blew down two fine old trees in the park, and a miserable wet day, in which we made our way to the dentist's.

Colonel Talbot dined here—cast in the same mould as all the other Talbots I have ever seen: his face has been bronzed by hardships, and *scorched* by the reflection from American *snows:* his manner of speaking slow—not too slow, only slow enough to be calmly distinct; and when relating wonders and dangers, gives you at once the certainty of truth, and the belief in his fortitude and intrepid presence of mind. He related the visit from his European friend, when he had built his log house, and was his own servant-of-all-work; and gave us an account of an attack of the Indians upon Fort Talbot. He gives me the idea of the most cool courage imaginable. I could not help looking at him, as if he were Robinson Crusoe come to life

[1] Now in the Lateran Palace.

again, and continuing stories from his own book. He has now a very good house, or palace I should say; for he is not only lord of all he surveys, but actually king.

Do you recollect American Mrs. Griffith writing to tell me that Mr. Ralston would come to see us, and my extreme disappointment at his finding in Dublin that Miss Edgeworth was not at home, and so not going down to Edgeworthstown, and not seeing Lovell's school? He has found us out now, and Lady Elizabeth invited him here. He has travelled over half Europe and is going to Spain; but upon my giving him a note to Macintosh, with a draft upon him for five minutes' conversation, and notes to some other celebrated people, he, like a sensible man, determined to delay his journey on purpose to see them. Lady Elizabeth has been so kind to ask him to dine here to-day, and commissioned me to invite whoever I pleased to meet him. First we wrote to your brother, but he could not come; and then to Dr. Holland, but he was engaged to Holland House. In his note to me he says, "I have seen Mr. Ralston several times, and have been greatly pleased with his ingenuousness, acquirements, and agreeable manners." His father and mother are grand—and what is rather better, most benevolent—people in Philadelphia. Meantime I must go and write a letter of introduction for him to Count Edouard de la Grange, who is just returned from Spain to Paris, and may serve him. But I forgot to finish my sentence about the invitations to dinner. My third invitation was to Mr. Calcott, the painter, with whom we made acquaintance a few days ago. He has been more civil than I can tell you, promising us his ticket for the Exhibition, and preparing the way for our seeing pictures at Lord Liverpool's, Sir John Swinburne's, etc.; so I was glad to have this opportunity of asking him, and he breaks

an engagement to the Academy to accept of Lady Elizabeth's invitation.

Now I must "put on bonnet" to go to Lady Grey's. She is the most touching sight! and Lady Elizabeth's affection and respect for her! She has desired to see Fanny and Harriet to-day.

Feb. 9.

Like a child who keeps the plums of his pudding for the last, but who is so tedious in getting through the beginning, that his plate is taken away before he gets to his plums, *so* I often put off what I think the plums of my letters till "the post, ma'am," hurries it off without the best part.

In my hurried conclusion I forgot to tell you that Mr. Ralston has lately become acquainted with Mr. Perkins, the American, who has tried experiments on the compressibility of water, the results of which have astonished all the scientific world.

Wollaston, as Mr. Ralston affirms, has verified and warrants the truth of these experiments, which have not yet been published. The most wonderful part appeared to me incredible: under a great degree of compression the water, Mr. Ralston said, *turned to gas!*

Feb. 20.

Lady Lansdowne was here yesterday while I was in town; she heard that Fanny and Harriet were at home: got out and sat with them: very agreeable. Lady Bathurst has been here, and Lady Georgiana: asked us to a select party —Princess Lieven, etc.,—but we declined: could not leave Lady Elizabeth. I do not know that there is any truth in the report that Lady Georgiana is to marry Lord Liverpool: I should think not; for when we were at Cirencester, Lady

Bathurst read out of a letter, "So I hear Lady Georgiana is to be our Prime Minister," which she would not have done if the thing were really going on; and when I went to Lord Liverpool's a few days ago, he was in deep mourning, the hatchment still up on his house, his note-paper half an inch black border. If he were *courting*, surely the black border would diminish, and the hatchment would be taken down. I wish it were true, for I like both parties, and think it would be remarkably well suited.

Feb. 24.

Yesterday Captain Beaufort walked here to see us, and then walked with Harriet and me to Lady Listowel's, *ci-devant* Lady Ennismore, looking just the same as when we saw her at Kilkenny: excessively civil to us. Two curious pictures there done by an Irish boy, or man, of the name of Grogan, of Cork: one of these is an Irish wake; there is a great deal of original humour and invention in it, of the Wilkie, or, better still, of the Hogarth style.

But all this time you would be glad to know whether I am likely to have a house over my head or not? it cannot be decided till Tuesday—8, or 12, Holles Street.

Yesterday we went to see Mrs. Moutray at Mr. Sumner's most comfortable and superb house. She had been to see the poor Queen's pictures and goods, which are now for sale: a melancholy sight; all her dress, even her stays, laid out, and tarnished finery, to be purchased by the lowest of the low. There was a full-length picture of her when she was young and happy; another, beautiful, by Opie or Lawrence, standing screwing up a harp with one hand, and playing with her little daughter with the other.

To MRS. RUXTON.

8 HOLLES STREET, *March* 9.

We are comfortably settled in this good central situation. We were last Monday at a select early party at Mrs. Hope's. The new gallery of Flemish pictures given to Mr. Hope by his brother is beautifully arranged.

I have had the greatest pleasure in Francis Beaufort[1] going with us to our delightful breakfasts at Mr. Ricardo's —they enjoy each other's conversation so much. It has now become high fashion with blue ladies to talk Political Economy, and make a great jabbering on the subject, while others who have more sense, like Mrs. Marcet, hold their tongues and listen. A gentleman answered very well the other day when asked if he would be of the famous Political Economy Club, that he would, whenever he could find two members of it that agree in any one point. Meantime, fine ladies require that their daughters' governesses should teach Political Economy. "Do you teach Political Economy?" "No, but I can learn it." "O dear, no; if you don't teach it, you won't do for me."

Another style of governess is now the fashion,—the *ultra-French:* a lady-governess of this party and one of the Orleans' or *liberaux* met and came to high words, till all was calmed by the timely display of a ball-dress, trimmed with roses alternately red and white,—"Garniture aux préjugés vaincus." This should have been worn by those who formerly invented in the Revolution "Bals aux victimes."

Yesterday we breakfasted at Mrs. Somerville's, and sat in her painting-room. Left her at one o'clock, and went by appointment to Lansdowne House. Lady Lansdowne quite affectionate to Fanny and Harriet; had fire and

[1] Brother of the fourth Mrs. Edgeworth.

warm air in the superb new statue saloon on purpose for them. Mrs. Kennedy,—Sir Samuel Romilly's daughter,—came in, invited to meet us, very pleasing manners. Mrs. Nicholls,—Lady Lansdowne's niece,—"I like that you should know all I love."

Then we went with Captain and Mrs. Beaufort to Belzoni's tomb,—the model first, and then the tomb as large as life, painted in its proper colours,—a very striking spectacle, but I need not describe it; the book represents it perfectly.

Next door to the tomb are the Laplanders, the man about my size, at work, intently, but stupidly, on making a wooden spoon. The wife was more intelligent: a child of five years, very quiet gray eyes. In the middle of the apartment is a pen full of reindeer,—very gentle and ravenously eager for moss, of which there was a great basket. This moss, which they love as well as their own, has been found in great quantities on Bagshot Heath.

We went one night to the House of Commons: Mr. Whitbread took us there. A garret the whole size of the room—the former chapel—now the House of Commons; below, *kitcats* of Gothic chapel windows stopped up appear on each side above the floor: above, roof-beams. One lantern with one farthing candle, in a tin candlestick, all the light. In the middle of the garret is what seemed like a sentry-box of deal boards and old chairs placed round it: on these we got and stood and peeped over the top of the boards. Saw the large chandelier with lights blazing, immediately below: a grating of iron across veiled the light so that we could look down and beyond it: we saw half the table with the mace lying on it and papers, and by peeping hard two figures of clerks at the further end, but no eye could see the Speaker or his chair,—only his

feet; his voice and terrible "ORDER" was soon heard. We could see part of the Treasury Bench and the Opposition in their places,—the tops of their heads, profiles, and gestures perfectly. There was not any interesting debate,—the Knightsbridge affair and the Salt Tax,—but it was entertaining to us because we were curious to see and hear the principal speakers on each side. We heard Lord Londonderry, Mr. Peel, and Mr. Vansittart; and on the other side, Denman, Brougham, and Bennett, and several hesitating country gentlemen, who seemed to be speaking to please their constituents only. Sir John Sebright was as much at ease as in his own drawing-room at Beechwood: Mr. Brougham we thought the best speaker we heard, Mr. Peel next; Mr. Vansittart the best language, and most correct English, though there was little in what he said. The Speaker, we were told, had made this observation on Mr. Vansittart, that he never makes a mistake in grammar. Lord Londonderry makes the most extraordinary blunders and *mal-à-propos*. Mr. Denman speaks well. The whole, the speaking and the interest of the scene surpassed our expectations, and we felt proud to mark the vast difference between the English House of Commons and the French Chambre des Députés. *Nevertheless*, there are disturbances in Suffolk, and Lord Londonderry had to get up from dinner to order troops to be sent there.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

8 HOLLES STREET, *March*, 1822.

Your brother Francis is kind to us beyond description, and lets us take him where we will; he dined with us at Mrs. Weddell's,—this dear old lady copied last year in

her seventy-second year a beautiful crayon picture of Lady Dundas,—and here we met Lady Louisa Stuart, Mr. Stanley of Alderley, and many others.

Yesterday we went the moment we had swallowed our breakfast,—N.B. superfine green tea given to us by Mrs. Taddy,—by appointment to Newgate. The private door opened at sight of our tickets, and the great doors and the little doors, and the thick doors, and doors of all sorts, were unbolted and unlocked, and on we went through dreary but clean passages, till we came to a room where rows of empty benches fronted us. A table on which lay a large Bible. Several ladies and gentlemen entered and took their seats on benches at either side of the table, in silence.

Enter Mrs. Fry in a drab-coloured silk cloak, and plain borderless Quaker cap; a most benevolent countenance, —Guido-Madonna face,—calm, benign. "I must make an inquiry,—Is Maria Edgeworth here? and where?" I went forward; she bade us come and sit beside her. Her first smile as she looked upon me I can never forget.

The prisoners came in, and in an orderly manner ranged themselves on the benches. All quite clean, faces, hair, caps, and hands. On a very low bench in front, little children were seated and were *settled* by their mothers. Almost all these women, about thirty, were under sentence of transportation, some few only were for imprisonment. One who did not appear was under sentence of death,—frequently women when sentenced to death become ill, and unable to attend Mrs. Fry; the others come regularly and voluntarily.

She opened the Bible, and read in the most sweetly solemn, sedate voice I ever heard, slowly and distinctly, without anything in the manner that could distract atten-

tion from the matter. Sometimes she paused to explain, which she did with great judgment, addressing the convicts, "*we* have felt; *we* are convinced." They were very attentive, unaffectedly interested I thought in all she said, and touched by her manner. There was nothing put on in their countenances, not any appearance of hypocrisy. I studied their countenances carefully, but I could not see any which, without knowing to whom they belonged, I should have decided was bad; yet Mrs. Fry assured me that all those women had been of the worst sort. She confirmed what we have read and heard, that it was by their love of their children that she first obtained influence over these abandoned women. When she first took notice of one or two of their fine children, the mothers said that if she could but save their children from the misery they had gone through in vice, they would do anything she bid them. And when they saw the change made in their children by her schooling, they begged to attend themselves. I could not have conceived that the love of their children could have remained so strong in hearts in which every other feeling of virtue had so long been dead. The Vicar of Wakefield's sermon in prison is, it seems, founded on a deep and true knowledge of human nature,—"the spark of good is often smothered, never wholly extinguished."

Mrs. Fry often says an extempore prayer; but this day she was quite silent while she covered her face with her hands for some minutes: the women were perfectly silent with their eyes fixed upon her, and when she said, "you may go," they went away *slowly*. The children sat quite still the whole time,—when one *leaned*, the mother behind set her upright.

Mrs. Fry told us that the dividing the women into

classes has been of the greatest advantage, and putting them under the care of monitors. There is some little pecuniary advantage attached to the office of monitor which makes them emulous to obtain it.

We went through the female wards with Mrs. Fry, and saw the women at various works,—knitting, rug-making, etc. They have done a great deal of needlework very neatly, and some very ingenious. When I expressed my foolish wonder at this to Mrs. Fry's sister, she replied, "We have to do, recollect, ma'am, not with fools, but with rogues."

There is only one being among all those upon whom she has tried to make salutary impression, on whom she could make *none*,—an old Jewess. She is so depraved, and so odiously dirty that she cannot be purified, body or mind; wash her and put clean clothes on, she tears and dirties them, and swarms with vermin again in twenty-four hours. I saw her in the kitchen where they were served with broth: a horrible spectacle, which haunted me the whole day and night afterwards. One eye had been put out and closed up, and the other glared with malignant passion. I asked her if she was not happier since Mrs. Fry had come to Newgate. She made no direct reply, but said, "It is hard to be happy in a jail; if you tasted *that* broth you'd find it is nothing but dish-water." I did taste it, and found it was very good.

Far from being disappointed with the sight of what Mrs. Fry has effected, I was delighted. We emerged again from the thick, dark, silent walls of Newgate to the bustling city, and thence to the elegant part of the town; and before we had time to arrange our ideas, and while the mild Quaker face and voice, and wonderful resolution and successful exertions of this admirable woman were

fresh in our minds, morning visitors flowed in, and common life again went on.

Three or four of these visitors were very agreeable, Sir Humphry Davy, Major Colebrook, Lord Radstock, and Mrs. Scott,—Mrs. Scott of Danesfield, whom and which we saw when at Lord Carrington's. The Bellman.

April 3.

Fanny and Harriet have been with me at that grand exclusive paradise of fashion, Almack's. Observe that the present Duchess of Rutland who had been a few months away from town, and had offended the Lady Patronesses by not visiting them, could not at her utmost need get a ticket from any one of them, and was kept out to her amazing mortification. This may give you some idea of the importance attached to admission to Almack's. Kind Mrs. Hope got tickets for us from Lady Gwydyr and Lady Cowper; the Patronesses can only give tickets to those whom they *personally know;* on that plea they avoided the Duchess of Rutland's application, she had not visited them,—"they really did not know her Grace;" and Lady Cowper swallowed a camel for me, because she did not really know me; I had met her, but had never been introduced to her till I saw her at Almack's. Fanny and Harriet were beautifully dressed: their heads by Lady Lansdowne's hairdresser, Trichot: Mrs. Hope lent Harriet a wreath of her own French roses. Fanny was said by many to be, if not the prettiest, the most elegant looking young woman in the room, and certainly "elegance, birth, and fortune were there assembled," as the newspapers would truly say.

Towards the close of the evening Captain Waldegrave came to me with Mr. Bootle Wilbraham, who has been

alternately Wilbraham Bootle and Bootle Wilbraham, till nobody knows how to call him: no matter for me, he came to say he was at our service and our most devoted humble servant to show us the Millbank Penitentiary whenever we pleased. He is a grand man, and presently returned with a grander,—the Marquis of Londonderry, who by his own account had been dying some time with impatience to be introduced to us; talked much of *Castle Rackrent*, etc., and of Ireland. Of course I thought his manner and voice very agreeable. He is much fatter and much less solemn than when I saw him in the Irish House of Commons. He introduced us to jolly fat Lady Londonderry, who was vastly gracious, and invited us to one of the four grand parties which she gives every season: *and* it surprised me very much to perceive the rapidity with which a minister's having talked to a person spread through the room. Everybody I met afterwards that night and the next day *observed* to me that they had seen Lord Londonderry talking to me for a great while!

We had a crowded party at Lady Londonderry's, but they had no elbows.

April 4.

I recollect that I left off yesterday in the midst of a well-bred crowd at Lady Londonderry's,—her Marchioness-ship standing at her drawing-room door all in scarlet for three hours, receiving the world with smiles; and how it happened that her fat legs did not sink under her I cannot tell. The chief, I may say the only satisfaction we had at Lady Londonderry's, while we won our way from room to room, nodding to heads, or touching hands, as we passed,—besides the prodigious satisfaction of feeling ourselves at such a height of fashion, etc.—was in meeting Mr. Bankes, and Lady Charlotte, and Mr. Lemon behind the door of

one of the rooms, and proceeding in the tide along with them into an inner sanctuary, in which we had cool air and a sight of the great Sèvres china vase, which was presented by the King of France to Lord Londonderry at the signing of the peace. Much agreeable conversation from this travelled Mr. Bankes. We heard from Lady Charlotte that her entertaining sister, Lady Harriet Frampton, had just arrived, and when I expressed our wish to become acquainted with her, Mr. Bankes exclaimed, "She is so eager to know you that she would willingly have come to you in worsted stockings, just as she alighted from her travelling carriage, with sandwiches in one pocket and letters and gloves stuffing out the other."

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Hope. Mr. Hope, characteristically curious in vases, turned me round to a famous malachite vase which was given by the Emperor of Russia to Lord Londonderry—square, upon a pedestal high as my little table; and another, a present of I forget who. So, you see, he has a congress of vases, *en desire-t-il mieux?*

Many, many dinners and evening parties have rolled over one another, and are swept out of my memory by the tide of the last fortnight: one at Lady Lansdowne's, and one at Mrs. Hope's, and I will go on to one at Miss White's. Mr. Henry Fox, Lord Holland's son, is lame. I sat between him and young Mr. Ord, Fanny between Mr. Milman (the Martyr of Antioch) and Sir Humphry Davy (the Martyr of Matrimony), Harriet between Dr. Holland and young Ord: Mr. Moore (Canterbury) and old-ish Ord completed this select dinner. In the evening the principal personages were Lord James Stuart and Mrs. Siddons: she was exceedingly entertaining, told anecdotes, repeated some passages from *Jane Shore* beautifully, and invited us to a private evening party at her house.

We have become very intimate with Wollaston and Kater, Mr. Warburton, and Dr. and Mrs. Somerville: they and Dr. and Mrs. Marcet form the most agreeable as well as scientific society in London. We have been to Greenwich Observatory. You remember Mr. and Mrs. Pond? I liked him for the candour and modesty with which he spoke of the parallax dispute between him and Dr. Brinkley, of whom he and all the scientific world here speak with the highest reverence.

We went yesterday with Lord Radstock to the Millbank Penitentiary, where by appointment we were met by Mr. Wilbraham Bootle. We had the pleasure of taking with us Alicia and Captain Beaufort. Solitary confinement for the worst offences: solitary confinement in *darkness* at first. There are many young offenders; the governors say they are horrid plagues, for they are not allowed to flog them, and they are little influenced by darkness and solitary confinement: oldish men much afraid of it. The disease most common in this prison is scrofula; and it is a curious fact that those who work with their arms at the mills are free from it, those who work with their feet at the tread-mills are subject to it.

Adieu. I must here break off, as Mrs. Primate Stuart has come in, and left me no time for more. The Primate has recovered, and has set out this day with his son for Winchester, to see some haunts of his youth, takes a trip to Bath, and returns in a few days, when I hope we shall see him.

..

April 6.

I left off in the Millbank Penitentiary, but what more I was going to say I cannot recollect; so, my dear mother, you must go without that wisdom. All that I know now is that I saw a woman who is under sentence of death for having

poisoned her sister. She appeared to me to be insane; but it is said that it is a frequent attempt of the prisoners to sham madness, in order to get to Bedlam, from which they can get out when *cured*. One woman deceived all the medical people, clergyman, jailer, and turnkeys, was removed to Bedlam as incurably mad, and from Bedlam made her escape. I saw a girl of about eighteen, who had been educated at Miss Hesketh's school, and had been put to service in a friend's family. She was in love with a footman who was turned away: the old housekeeper refused the girl permission to go out the night this man was turned away: the girl went straight to a drawer in the housekeeper's room, where she had seen a letter with money in it, took it, and put a coal into the drawer, to set the house on fire! For this she was committed, tried, convicted, and would have been hanged, but for Sir Thomas Hesketh's intercession: he had her sent to the Penitentiary for ten years. Would you not think that virtue and feeling were extinct in this girl? No: the task-mistress took us into the cell, where she was working in company with two other women; she has earned by her constant good conduct the privilege of working in company. One of the Miss Wilbrahams, when all the other visitors except myself had left the cell, turned back and said, "I think I saw you once when I was with Miss Hesketh at her school." The girl blushed, her face gave way, and she burst into an agony of tears, without being able to answer one word.

Yesterday we breakfasted at Mrs. Somerville's, and I put on for her a blue crape turban, to show her how Fanny's was put on, with which she had fallen in love. We dined at Mrs. Hughan's,[1] niece to Joanna Baillie: select party for

[1] Jean, daughter of Robert Milligan, Esq., of Cotswold, Gloucestershire.

Sir William Pepys, who is eighty-two, a most agreeable, lively old gentleman, who tells delightful anecdotes of Mrs. Montague, Sir Joshua, Burke, and Dr. Johnson. Mrs. Montague once whispered to Sir William, on seeing a very awkward man coming into the room, "There is a man who would give one of his hands to know what to do with the other." Excellent house of Mrs. Hughan's, full of flowers and luxuries. In the evening many people; the Baillies, and a Miss Jardine, granddaughter of Bruce, the traveller. We carried Sir William off with us at half-past nine to Mrs. Somerville's, and after we had been gone half an hour, Mr. Pepys, a *young* man between forty and fifty, arrived, and putting his glass up to his eye, spied about for his uncle, discovered that he was gone, and could not tell how or where! Miss Milligan, sister to Mrs. Hughan, told him Miss Edgeworth had carried him off. His own carriage arrived at eleven, and carried Mr. Pepys, by private orders, not knowing where he was going, to Mrs. Somerville's. We had brought Sir William there to hear Mrs. Kater sing and play Handel's music, of which he is passionately fond. It was worth while to bring him to hear her singing, he so exceedingly enjoyed it, and so does Wollaston, who sits as mute as a mouse and as still as the statue of a philosopher charmed.

I forgot to tell you that Lady Elizabeth Belgrave,[1] as pretty and winning as ever, came to see us with Lady Stafford; and yesterday, the third time of calling at her door, I was told by a pimpled, red-blotched door-holder that "her ladyship was not at home," but after he had turned the card to another form out of livery, he said, "My lady is at home to you, ma'am." So up we went, and she was very entertaining, with fresh observations from Paris, and much

[1] Daughter of the first Duke of Sutherland.

humour. She said she was sure there was some peculiar charm in the sound of the clinking of their swords in walking up and down the gallery of the Tuileries, which the old stupid ones pace every day for hours. She says she has met with much grateful attention from the royal family, and many of the French whom she had formerly known, but cannot give entertainments, because they have not the means. The Count d'Artois apologised; he has no separate dinner—always dined with the King, and "*very* sorry for it." Lady Stafford asked us all to dinner, but we were engaged to Mr. Morritt. She is to ask again after our return from the Deepdene, where we spend Monday and Tuesday with the dear Hopes.

To MRS. RUXTON.

8 HOLLES STREET, *April* 10, 1822.

The great variety of society in London, and the solidity of the sense and information to be gathered from conversation, strike me as far superior to Parisian society. We know, I think, six different and totally independent sets, of scientific, literary, political, travelled, artist, and the fine fashionable, of various shades; and the different styles of conversation are very entertaining.

Through Lydia White we have become more acquainted with Mrs. Siddons than I ever expected to be. She gave us the history of her first acting of *Lady Macbeth*, and of her resolving, in the sleep scene, to lay down the candlestick, contrary to the precedent of Mrs. Pritchard and all the traditions, before she began to wash her hands and say, "Out, vile spot!" Sheridan knocked violently at her door during the five minutes she had desired to have entirely to herself, to compose her spirits before the play

began. He burst in, and prophesied that she would ruin herself for ever if she persevered in this resolution *to lay down the candlestick!* She persisted, however, in her determination, succeeded, was applauded, and Sheridan begged her pardon. She described well the awe she felt, and the power of the excitement given to her by the sight of Burke, Fox, Sheridan, and Sir Joshua Reynolds in the pit. She invited us to a private reading-party at her own house: present only her daughter, a very pretty young lady, a Mrs. Wilkinson, Mr. Burney, Dr. Holland, Lydia White, Mr. Harness and ourselves. She read one of her finest parts, and that best suited to a private room—Queen Katherine. She was dressed so as to do well for the two parts she was to perform this night, of gentlewoman and queen—black velvet, with black velvet cap and feathers. She sat the whole time, and with a large Shakespear before her; as she knew the part of Katherine by heart, she seldom required the help of glasses, and she recited it incomparably well: the changes of her countenance were striking. From her first burst of indignation when she objects to the Cardinal as her judge, to her last expiring scene, was all so perfectly natural and so touching, we could give no applause but tears. Mrs. Siddons is beautiful even at this moment. Some who had seen her on the stage in this part assured me that it had a much greater effect upon them in a private room, because they were near enough to see the changes of her countenance, and to hear the pathos of her half-suppressed voice. Some one said that, in the dying scene, her very pillow seemed sick.

She spoke afterwards of the different parts which she had liked and disliked to act; and when she mentioned the characters and scenes she had found easy or difficult, it was curious to observe that the feelings of the actress

and the sentiments and reasons of the best critics meet. Whatever was not natural, or inconsistent with the main part of the character, she found she never could act well.

We spent three days at Easter at the Deepdene; the company there were Mr. C. Moore, Mr. Philip Henry Hope, Mr. and Miss Burrowes, Mr. Harness, Lord Fincastle, Lady Clare, and Lady Isabella Fitzgibbon, and Lord Archibald Hamilton. Deepdene is beautiful at this time of the year—the hawthorn hedges, the tender green of the larch and the sycamore in full leaf.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

HOLLES STREET, *April* 20.

We are going at two o'clock, and it is now half-past one, to a private view of Sir John Swinburne's pictures, and we are to dine nine miles out of town, at Plasket House, with Mrs. Fry.

Barry Fox came yesterday to Grove House, and looked much like a gentleman, as he is, and seemed pleased with his cousins, as well he might be.

I wish, my dearest mother, you would write a note to Dr. Holland in your next; he has been so kind and sympathising.[1] Miss Bessy Holland has come to stay some weeks with her brother—good for her, and for us; she is very amiable. I find a card from Jeffrey was left here while we were at Grove House.

Just returned from water-colour pictures; some of Prout's of old towns abroad, like Chester; met there—not at Chester—Lord Grey, Wilkie, Mulready, Lord Radstock, and the Miss Waldegraves, and Lady Stafford, who has more ready and good five minutes' conversation than any-

[1] On the death of Miss Edgeworth's beloved "aunt," Mrs. Charlotte Sneyd of Edgeworthstown.

body I know. She says the French have lost all their national recollections; in travelling through France she asked for various places famous in history, of which they had lost all memory.

Carriage at the door, and I have not begun to dress!

April 24.

The day before yesterday we saw Mrs. Tuite at Lady Sunderlin's. They have an admirable house. Miss Kitty Malone sees, and is most grateful for it.

Mrs. Fry's place at Plasket is beautiful, and she is delightful at home or at Newgate.

Paid a visit to Lady Derby; full as agreeable as when we saw her, half as fat, and twice as old; asked most kindly for you, and received your daughters with gracious grace.

Monday, went with Mr. Cohen and Mr. Cockerell to St. Paul's; he showed us his renovations done in excellent taste. Dined at Miss White's with Mr. Luttrell, Mr. Hallam, Mr. Sharpe, and Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Nicholson; she is Lady Davy's half-sister. Most agreeable conversation; no dinners more agreeable than Lydia White's. Poor creature! how she can go through it I cannot imagine, she is dying. It is dreadful to look at her!

In the evening at Miss Stable's, Anna's friend; met there Mrs. Cunliffe, who was Miss Crewe, very agreeable and, though not regularly handsome, very pleasing in countenance and person.

Tuesday, spent a happy hour at the Museum. We dined at Mrs. Marcet's, with only herself and children. Then to an "at home," at Mrs. Ricardo's, merely for ten minutes to see the famous Mr. Hume. Don't like him much; attacks all things and persons, never listens, has no judgment.

May 3.

Since Harriet last wrote we have been to Harrow to hear the speeches of the first class of boys, our future orators. It was a very interesting scene, attended by many ladies, as well as gentlemen. Two of the speeches were from *Henry IV.*, one the crown tried on, well repeated. The situation of the school is beautiful, the lawn laid out with great taste; the master, Dr. Butler, a very well-informed agreeable man, with a picturesque head. We had a very elegant collation, and I sat beside a very agreeable thin old nobleman of the old school, Lord Clarendon. Upon the whole, after hearing the speeches and recitations of these youths, I said to myself, how much better my father taught to read and recite than any of these masters can.

May 10.

The sudden death of the Primate[1] and the horrible circumstances attending it have incapacitated me from any more home-writing at this moment. Mrs. Stuart gave him the medicine; he had twice asked for his draught, and when she saw the servant come in she ran down, seized the bottle and poured it out without looking at the label, which was most distinct "for external application." When dying, and when struggling under the power of the opium, he called for a pencil and wrote these words for a comfort to his wife: "I could not have lived long, my dear love, at all events."

[1] Hon. William Stuart, Archbishop of Armagh, fifth son of the third Earl of Bute; he married Sophia, daughter of Thomas Penn of Stoke Poges.

May 22.

I enclose a note from Lady Louisa Stuart, the Primate's sister; it is most touching, especially the account of the feelings of his parishioners.

We have been at the Caledonian ball — Harriet has written a description of it to Pakenham; and also to a very pleasant dance at Mrs. Shaw Lefevre's,[1] where Fanny and Harriet had good partners.

I have subscribed £10 to the Irish poor subscription. Spring Rice, whom I very much like, tells me he has been touched to the heart by the generous eagerness with which the English merchants and city people have contributed to this fund. A very large sum is already at his disposal, and he has wisely considered that if this money be not judiciously applied it will do more harm than good. He has done me the honour to consult me about his plan, of which I enclose a copy.

At Captain Kater's breakfast yesterday we met Greenough, Captain Beaufort, Warburton, and young Herschel, a man of great abilities,[2] to whom Sir Humphry Davy paid an elegant compliment the other day in a speech as President to the Royal Society. "His father must rejoice in such a son, who secures to him a double immortality."

Just received yours of the 17th. Curious that you should have been saying to me the same thing I was saying to you about the Irish subscriptions. Poor Peggy Mulheeran! her letter is most pathetic. Fanny and Harriet are at this moment dining at dear Mrs. Lushington's, and

[1] Daughter of Lady Elizabeth Whitbread, married to Charles Shaw Lefevre, afterwards Viscount Eversley.

[2] Afterwards Sir John Herschel, the famous astronomer and philosopher.

I am going alone to a dinner at *Lydia's*, to meet Sidney Smith—*they* come in the evening. We met Lady Byron lately at Mrs. Lushington's. Dinner at Lord and Lady Darnley's—all manner of attention. Greenough has been most kind; admirable collection of fossils—taking out all his thousand drawers for us. Bellman.

May 28.

In the hurried life we have led for some weeks past, and among the great variety of illustrious and foolish people we have seen pass in rapid panoramas before us, some remain for ever fixed in the memory, and some few touch the heart. We have just breakfasted with Spring Rice and Lady Theodosia. She has a placid, amiable, and winning countenance—pretty curly-haired children, such as you or Sir Joshua would paint.

At this breakfast were Mr. Rice's sister, Lady Hunt, a charming woman. Mr. Grant, our late secretary, with sense, goodness, and indolence in his countenance, and Mr. Randolph, the American, very tall and thin, as if a stick instead of shoulders stretched out his coat; his hair tied behind with a black ribbon, but not pigtailed, it flows from the ribbon, like old Steele's, with a curl at the end, mixed brown and gray; his face wrinkled like a peach-stone, but all pliable, muscles moving with every sensation of a feeling soul and lively imagination; quick dark eyes, with an indefinable expression of acquired habitual sedateness, in despite of nature; his tone of voice mild and repressed, yet in this voice he speaks thoughts that breathe and words that burn; he is one of the most eloquent men I ever heard speak, and there is a novelty in his view of things, and in his new world of allusions, in art and nature, which is highly interesting.

Besides the pleasure we should naturally have taken in

his conversation, we have been doubly pleased by his gratifying attention to ourselves, and, my dearest mother, still more by the manner in which he distinguished your Francis,[1] who was with us. Spring Rice told us that Mr. Abercromby, who had met him at Joanna Baillie's, told him he was one of the finest and most promising boys he had ever seen.

Do, for heaven's sake, some good soul or body, write forthwith to Black Castle, and learn whether Aunt Ruxton likes the gown I sent her—gray cloth. If not, I will get her another.

FROGNEL, HAMPSTEAD, *June* 3.

A few lines ever so short and hurried are better than none. We gave up our house and paid all our bills on Saturday; left London and came to Frognel[2]—delicious Frognel! Hay-making—profusion of flowers—rhododendrons as fine as four of mine, flowering down to the grass. All our friends with open arms on steps in the verandah to receive us.

A large party of Southebys, etc., including Mrs. Tuite, put by for future description. Second day: Wollaston, Dr. and Miss Holland. Harriet sat beside Wollaston at dinner, and he talked unusually, veiling for her the terror of his beak and lightning of his eye. He has indeed been very kind and amiable in distinguishing your daughters as worth speaking to.

To-day I came to town with Mrs. Carr, and my sisters, and the Miss Carrs, and they went to a Prison Discipline meeting to hear Macintosh speak; but I was not able to go, and have done worlds of business since.

We have changed our plans a little: going to Ports-

[1] Her half-brother, son of Mrs. Edgeworth.
[2] To Mr. Carr's.

mouth first, and to Slough on our return; we were to have gone by Slough, but the Prince of Denmark and the King going to Ascot took up all horses and beds, so we were obliged to go the other road.

51 MANCHESTER STREET, LONDON,
June 10.

We have accomplished, much to our satisfaction, our long-intended journey to Portsmouth. On Tuesday, at nine o'clock in the morning, we found ourselves according to appointment, in our own dear carriage, at your brother's door, and he and Francis seated themselves on the barouche seat. The weather was bronzing and melting hot, but your brother would insist on being bronzed and melted there during the heat of the day, in a stoical style disdaining a parasol, though why it should be more unmanly to use a parasol than a parapluie I cannot, for the sense of me, understand.

Lady Grey, wife of the commissioner—he is away—ordered all the works and dockyard to be open to us, and the Government boat to attend upon us; saw the *Nelson*—just finished; and went over the *Phaeton*, and your brother showed us his midshipman's berth and his lieutenant's cabin. And now for the Block machinery, you will say, but it is impossible to describe this in a letter of moderate or immoderate size. I will only say that the ingenuity and successful performance far surpassed my expectations. Machinery so perfect appears to act with the happy certainty of instinct and the foresight of reason combined.

We took a barge to the Isle of Wight—charming day. You take a sociable, and the *Felicity-hunter* goes in it as far as the horses can take him. It was the most gratifying

thing to me to see "Uncle Francis" and all of them so happy. We slept at Steephill; and in the morning went to see Carisbrook Castle. Dined at Portsmouth with Sir James and Lady Lyon.

But oh, my dear mother, at the little pretty flowery-lawned inn where we dined on our way to Slough, as your brother was reading the newspaper, he came to the death of our dear Mr. Smith, of Easton Grey. At Sir Benjamin Hobhouse's, a few months ago, he was the gayest of the gay, and she the fondest and happiest of wives.

At Slough we saw the great telescope—never used now. Drove to Windsor—building and terrace equal to my expectations. At night the clouds were so good as to disperse, and we saw a double star.

Miss Edgeworth's wonderful conversational powers, combined with her homely aspect, and perfectly unassuming manners, made a great impression upon many of those who met her in London. Ticknor says of Maria Edgeworth: "There was a life and spirit about her conversation, she threw herself into it with such *abandon*, she retorted with such brilliant repartee, and, in short, she talked with such extraordinary flow of natural talent, that I don't know whether anything of the kind could be finer."

On 27th June Miss Edgeworth returned with her half-sisters to Edgeworthstown, taking

up the thread of her domestic affairs as if there had been no interruption, and she immediately set to work on the sequel to *Harry and Lucy*.

MARIA *to* MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *July* 23, 1822.

Honora is staying at Lough Glyn with Mr. and Mrs. Strickland; they are making judicious and incessant exertions for the relief of the poor and the improvement of the people in their neighbourhood. It is very extraordinary that, in the part of the County of Monaghan to which Mr. Strickland went last week for flax seed for the poor tenants in his neighbourhood, he found that there is plenty of everything—no distress felt. The famine seems to have been as capricious as the malaria in passing over some places and settling upon others. Here we go on in our parish without having recourse to public subscription.

August 7.

We have just returned, all of us, from walking two miles on the Mullingar road, in hopes of meeting Francis, who was expected in a chaise from Mullingar, as the coach *sleeps* there. Just as we had reached the hall door by moonlight, in despair, we heard a doubtful noise, which none but a maternal ear—a very nice ear on some occasions—could judge whether of cart or chaise: it was a chaise, with Francis in it; and here he is, one of the most agreeable and happy boys I ever saw.

I have written to Walter Scott, claiming his promise of coming here; but I doubt his being in Ireland: I agree with you that his play is very stupid. Joanna Baillie[1] suggested the subject, and he wrote it as a contribution to a

[1] *Halidon Hill.*

miscellany formed of *voluntaries* from all the poets and wits of the day, to make a fund for some widowed friend of hers in great distress. He wrote it with good intentions; but, as Madame de Staël says, "Les bons intentions ne sont pour rien dans les ouvrages d'esprit."

Never read *The Lollards* if it falls in your way, unless you like to see John Huss burned over again. What pleasure have people in such horrid subjects?

You ask me what I am doing besides *Early Lessons*, and if I have made any progress in "Travellers."[1] Do you think, my dearest aunt, that I can write *Early Lessons* with my left hand and "Travellers" with my right? You have too good an opinion of my dexterity. I assure you it is all I can do to satisfy myself tolerably as I go on with this sequel to *Harry and Lucy*, which engages all my attention. I am particularly anxious to finish that *well*, as it was my dear father's own and *first* book. As it must be more scientific than the other *Early Lessons*, it is more difficult to me, who have so little knowledge on those subjects, and am obliged to go so warily, lest I should teach error, or pretend to teach what I do not know. I have written about fifty pages. I fear you will not like it as well as you were so kind as to like *Frank*. I could never be easy writing anything else for my own amusement till I have done this, which I know my father wished to have finished. You will see in Dr. Holland's letter some admirable hints for "Travellers," and I expect many more from you, dear aunt: we will talk it over in the days of October. How many things we have talked over together! *Rackrent* especially, which you first suggested to me, and encouraged me to go on with.

[1] A tale she had thought of writing, but she never even made a sketch of it.

August 10.

My dear aunt, I know how you must have been shocked when you heard of the manner of Lord Londonderry's death. As Dr. Holland says, "If we were to have looked from one end of the British Empire to the other, we could not have pitched on an individual that seemed less likely to commit suicide."

Whitbread, Sir Samuel Romilly, Lord Londonderry—all to perish in the same manner!

Sept. 10.

In this frank you will receive a copy of a very interesting letter from Fanny Stewart. The post and steam vessels bring the most distant parts of the world now so much within our reach that friends cannot be much more separated by being at "Nova Zembla, or the LORD knows where," than by being in different counties of the same kingdom. There is Fanny Stewart dining with Sneyd's friends, the Bishop of Quebec's family; and young Mountain was in Switzerland when we were at Interlachen with Sneyd and Henrica, and the year before at Ardbraccan and Edgeworthstown. Things are odd till they pair off, and so become even. Sneyd and Henrica, who were at Geneva, have been invited to the Baron Polier's, near Lausanne, the brother of Madame de Montolieu, whom I told you of. Madame Polier was the intimate friend of an intimate friend of Henrica's, Miss French, of Derby, who has married a Cambridge friend of Sneyd's, Mr. Smedley, and they are now on a visit at the said Madame Polier's—a Derbyshire party in the heart of Switzerland, and by various connections *felted* together!

When Honora is on the sofa beside you, make her give you an account of Francis's play, *Catiline*, which he and

Fanny, and Harriet and Sophy, and James Moilliet and Pakenham *got up* without our being in the secret, and acted the night before last, as it were impromptu, to our inexpressible surprise and pleasure. Francis, during his holidays with us in London, used to be often scribbling something; but I never inquired or guessed what it was. Fanny and Harriet, in the midst of the hurry of London dissipation, and of writing all manner of notes, etc., for me, and letters home innumerable, contrived to copy out fair for him all his scraps; and when put together they made a goodly tragedy in two acts, wonderfully well written for his age—some parts, for any age, excellent.

After tea the library became empty suddenly of all the young people. My aunt Mary, my brother Lovell, and I remaining with Quin, who had dined here, talking on, never missed them; and the surprise was as great as heart could wish when my mother put into our hands the play-bills, and invited us to follow her to her dressing-room.

CATILINE,

A Tragedy, in Two Acts.

Catiline (in love with Aurelia) . .	Francis.
Cato (father of Aurelia)	Pakenham.
Cicero (in love with Aurelia) . . .	Harriet.
Cæsar	Moilliet.
Aurelia (daughter of Cato) . . .	Sophy.
Julia (wife to Cato)	Fanny.

We found Lucy on her sofa, with her feet towards the green-house; a half-circle of chairs for the audience, with their backs touching the wardrobe—candlestick-footlights, well shaded with square sofa-cushions standing on end.

Prologue spoken by Harriet; curtain drew back, and

Catiline and Aurelia appeared. Fanny had dressed Francis, from Kennet's *Antiquities*, out of an old rag-chest, and a more complete little Roman figure I never saw, though made up no mortal can tell how, like one of your own doings, dear aunt, with a crown of ilex leaves. Aurelia was perfectly draped in my French crimson shawl; she looked extremely classical and pretty, and her voice was so sweet, and her looks alternately so indignant to Catiline and so soft when she spoke of the man she loved, that I do not wonder Catiline was so desperately enamoured.

Pakenham was wonderful: he had received no instructions. They had determined to leave him to himself, and see what would come of it. He had brought down an old wig from the garret, and Catiline and Cato could not settle which it became best or worst; so Catiline wore his ilex crown, and Pakenham a scarlet cap and black velvet cloak, his eyebrows and chin darkened, a most solemn, stern countenance, a roll of white paper in his hand, the figure immovable, as if cut in stone: the soul of Cato seemed to have got into him. I never heard any actor speak better, nor did I ever see a part better sustained; it seemed as if one saw Cato through a diminishing glass. In one scene he interrupts Cicero, who is going off into a fine simile—"Enough: the tale." He said these three words so well, with such severity of tone, and such a piercing look, that I see and hear him still. His voice was as firm as a man's, and his self-possession absolute. He had his part so perfectly, that he was as independent of the prompter as of all the rest of the world.

Moilliet recited and played his part of Cæsar wondrous well. You may think how well Pakenham and all of them must have acted, when we could stand the ridicule of Pakenham's Cato opposite to Moilliet's Cæsar. One of

James Moilliet's eyes would have contained all the eyes of Cato, Catiline, and Cicero. Fanny, as Julia, was beautiful.

BLACK CASTLE, *Dec.* 6, 1822.

How do you all do, my dear friends, after last night's hurricane?[1] Have any trees been blown away? Has the spire stood? Is Madgy Woods alive? How many roofs of houses in the town have been blown away, and how many hundred slates and panes of glass must be replaced? The glass dome over the staircase at Ardbraccan has been blown away; two of the saloon windows blown in. The servants in this house sat up all night; I slept soundly. My aunt, roused at an unwonted hour from her bed this morning, stood at the foot of mine while I was yet dreaming; and she avers that when she told me that eight trees and the great green gates were blown down, that I sat up in my bed, and, opening one eye, answered, "Is it in the newspaper, ma'am?" When I came out to breakfast, the first object I beheld was the uprooted elms lying prostrate opposite the breakfast-room windows; and Mr. Fitzherbert says more than a hundred are blown down in the uplands.

Now I have done with the hurricane, I must tell you a dream of Bess's: she thought she went to call upon a lady, and found her reading a pious tract called "The Penitent Poodle!"

To MRS. O'BEIRNE.

BLACK CASTLE, *Jan.* 15, 1823.

We are delighted with *Peveril*, though there is too much of the dwarfs and the elfie. Scott cannot deny him-

[1] Numbers of the finest trees were blown down. The staircase skylight was blown away, and the lead which surrounded it rolled up as neatly as if just out of the plumber's: roofs were torn off and cabins blown down.

self one of these spirits in some shape or other; I hope that we shall find that this elfin page, who has the power of shrinking or expanding, as it seems, to suit the occasion, is made really necessary to the story. I think the dwarf more allowable and better drawn than the page, true to history, and consistent; but Finella is sometimes handsome enough to make duke and king ready to be in love with her, and sometimes an odious little fury, clenching her hands, and to be lifted up or down stairs out of the hero's way. The indistinctness about her is not that indistinctness which belongs to the sublime, but that which arises from unsteadiness in the painter's hand when he sketched the figure. He touched and retouched at different times, without having, as it seems, a determined idea himself of what he would make her; nor had he settled whether she should bring with her "airs from heaven," or blasts from that place which is never named to ears polite.

In May 1823 Miss Edgeworth took her half-sisters Harriet and Sophy to Scotland. It was a very happy time to her, chiefly because there she made an acquaintance with Sir Walter Scott, which soon ripened into an intimate and lasting friendship. He had already admired her stories, which he spoke of as "a sort of *essence* of common sense."

MARIA *to* MISS HONORA EDGEWORTH.

KINNEIL, *June* 2, 1823.

I wish you were here with us. We arrived between nine and ten last night. The sea-shore approaching Kinneil

House is exactly the idea I had of the road to Glenthorn Castle; the hissing sound of the wheels and all, and at last the postilion stopped where one road sloped directly down into the Frith of Forth, and another turned abruptly up hill. He said, "This is a-going into the water; I ha' come the wrong way." And up the narrow road up the hill he went and turned the carriage, and down again, and back the road we had come some little distance, and splash across to a road on the opposite side, and then by the oddest back way that seemed to be leading us into the stables, till at last we saw the door of the real house, an old but white-washed castle-mansion. A short-faced old butler in black came out of a sort of sentry-box back door to receive us, and through odd passages and staircases we reached the drawing-room, where we found fire and candles, and Mrs. Stewart and a young tall man; Mrs. Stewart, just as you saw her at Bowood, received Harriet and Sophy in her arms, spoke of their dear mother and of Honora, and seated us on the sofa, and told Sophy to open a letter from Fanny, which she put into her hand, and "feel herself at home," which indeed we did. The tall young man was no hindrance to this feeling; an intimate friend, a Mr. Jackson, who has been staying with Mr. Stewart as his companion ever since his illness.

We passed through numerous ante-chambers, nooks, and halls—broad white stone corner staircase, winding with low-arched roof. Our two rooms open into one another—mine large, with four black doors, one locked and two opening into closets, and back stairs, and if you mount to another story, all the rooms are waste garrets. Mrs. Stewart told us this morning that there were plenty of ghosts at our service belonging to Kinneil House. One in particular, Lady Lilyburn, who is often seen all in white, as a ghost

should be, and with white wings, fluttering on the top of the castle, from whence she leaps into the sea—a prodigious leap of three or four hundred yards, nothing for a well-bred ghost. At other times she wears boots, and stumps up and down stairs in them, and across passages, and through bedchambers, frightening ladies' maids and others. We have not heard her *yet*.

When we looked out of our windows this morning we saw fine views, and in the shrubbery near the house some of the largest lilacs I ever saw in rich flower. From another window, half a mile length of avenue with gates through which we should by rights have approached the front of the house. But all this time I have not said one word of what I had intended to be the subject of this: Lanark and Mr. Owen's school. I am called down to Lady Anna Maria Elliot;[1] my mother may remember her in former days—she is said to be like Die Vernon.

To MRS. RUXTON.

EDINBURGH, 32 ABERCROMBY PLACE,
June 8, 1823.

You have had our history up to Kinneil House. Mr. and Miss Stewart accompanied us some miles on our road to show us the palace of Linlithgow—very interesting to see, but not to describe. The drive from Linlithgow to Edinburgh is nothing extraordinary, but the road approaching the city is grand, and the first view of the castle and "mine own romantic town" delighted my companions; the day was fine and they were sitting outside on the barouche seat—a seat which you, my dear aunt, would not have envied them with all their fine prospects. By this approach

[1] Afterwards Countess Russell.

to Edinburgh there are no suburbs; you drive at once through magnificent broad streets and fine squares. All the houses are of stone, darker than the Ardbraccan stone, and of a kind that is little injured by weather or time. Margaret Alison[1] had taken lodgings for us in Abercromby Place—finely built, with hanging shrubbery garden, and the house as delightful as the situation. As soon as we had unpacked and arranged our things the evening of our arrival, we walked, about ten minutes' distance from us, to our dear old friends, the Alisons. We found them shawled and bonneted, just coming to see us. Mr. Alison and Sir Walter Scott had settled that we should dine the first day after our arrival with Mr. Alison, which was just what we wished; but on our return home we found a note from Sir Walter:

"DEAR MISS EDGEWORTH,

"I have just received your kind note, just when I had persuaded myself it was most likely I should see you in person or hear of your arrival. Mr. Alison writes to me you are engaged to dine with him to-morrow, which puts Roslin out of the question for that day, as it might keep you late. On Sunday I hope you will join our family-party at five, and on Monday I have asked one or two of the Northern Lights on purpose to meet you. I should be engrossing at any time, but we shall be more disposed to be so just now, because on the 12th I am under the necessity of going to a different kingdom (only the kingdom of *Fife*) for a day or two. To-morrow, if it is quite

[1] Margaret, daughter of Dr. James Gregory, married to William Pulteney Alison, Professor of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh.

agreeable, I will wait on you about twelve, and hope you will permit me to show you some of our improvements.

"I am always,

"Most respectfully yours,

"WALTER SCOTT.

"EDINBURGH, *Friday.*

"*Postscript.*—Our old family coach is *licensed* to carry *six*; so take no care on that score. I enclose Mr. Alison's note; truly sorry I could not accept the invitation it contains.

"*Postscript.*—My wife insists I shall add that the Laird of Staffa promised to look in on us this evening at eight or nine, for the purpose of letting us hear one of his clansmen sing some Highland boat-songs and the like, and that if you will come, as the Irish should to the Scotch, without any ceremony, you will hear what is perhaps more curious than mellifluous. The man returns to the isles to-morrow. There are no strangers with us; no party; none but all our own family and two old friends. Moreover, all our woman-kind have been calling at Gibbs's hotel, so if you are not really tired and late, you have not even pride, the ladies' last defence, to oppose to this request. But, above all, do not fatigue yourself and the young ladies. No dressing to be thought of."

Ten o'clock struck as I read the note; we were tired —we were not fit to be seen; but I thought it right to accept "Walter Scott's" cordial invitation; sent for a hackney coach, and just as we were, without dressing, went. As the coach stopped, we saw the hall lighted, and the moment the door opened, heard the joyous sounds of loud singing. Three servants—"The Miss Edgeworths"

sounded from hall to landing-place, and as I paused for a moment in the anteroom, I heard the first sound of Walter Scott's voice—"The Miss Edgeworths *come.*"

The room was lighted by only one globe lamp. A circle were singing loud and beating time—all stopped in an instant, and Walter Scott in the most cordial and courteous manner stepped forward to welcome us: "Miss Edgeworth, this is so kind of you!"

My first impression was, that he was neither so large, nor so heavy in appearance as I had been led to expect by description, prints, bust, and picture. He is more lame than I expected, but not unwieldy; his countenance, even by the uncertain light in which I first saw it, pleased me much, benevolent, and full of genius without the slightest effort at expression; delightfully natural, as if he did not know he was Walter Scott or the Great Unknown of the North, as if he only thought of making others happy.[1] After naming to us "Lady Scott, Staffa, my

[1] Miss Edgeworth describes Sir Walter Scott in her *Helen:* "If you have seen Raeburn's admirable pictures, or Chantrey's speaking bust, you have as complete an idea of Sir Walter Scott as painting or sculpture can give. The first impression of his appearance and manner was surprising to me, I recollect, from its quiet, unpretending good-nature; but scarcely had that impression been made, before I was struck with something of the chivalrous courtesy of other times. In his conversation you would have found all that is most delightful in all his works—the combined talents and knowledge of the historian, novelist, antiquary, and poet. He recited poetry admirably, his whole face and figure kindling as he spoke; but whether talking, reading, or reciting, he never tired me, even with admiring. And it is curious that, in conversing with him, I frequently found myself forgetting that I was speaking with Sir Walter Scott; and, what is even more extraordinary, forgetting that Sir Walter Scott was speaking to me, till I was awakened to the conviction by his saying something which no one else could have said. Altogether, he was certainly the most perfectly agreeable and perfectly amiable great man I ever knew."

daughter Lockhart, Sophia, another daughter Anne, my son, my son-in-law Lockhart," just in the broken circle as they then stood, and showing me that only his family and two friends, Mr. Clark and Mr. Sharpe, were present, he sat down for a minute beside me on a low sofa, and on my saying, "Do not let us interrupt what was going on," he immediately rose and begged Staffa to bid his boatman strike up again. "Will you then join in the circle with us?" he put the end of a silk handkerchief into my hand, and others into my sisters'; they held by these handkerchiefs all in their circle again, and the boatman began to roar out a Gaelic song, to which they all stamped in time and repeated the chorus which, as far as I could hear, sounded like "*At am Vaun! At am Vaun!*" frequently repeated with prodigious enthusiasm. In another I could make out no intelligible sound but "Bar! bar! bar!" But the boatman's dark eyes were ready to start out of his head with rapture as he sung and stamped, and shook the handkerchief on each side, and the circle imitated.

Lady Scott is so exactly what I had heard her described, that it seemed as if we had seen her before. She must have been very handsome—French dark large eyes; civil and good-natured. Supper at a round table, a family supper, with attention to us, just sufficient and no more. The impression left on my mind this night was, that Walter Scott is one of the best-bred men I ever saw, with all the exquisite politeness which he knows so well how to describe, which is of no particular school or country, but which is of all countries, the politeness which arises from good and quick sense and feeling, which seems to know by instinct the characters of others, to see what will please, and put all his guests at their ease. As I sat beside him at supper, I could not believe he was a stranger, and

forgot he was a great man. Mr. Lockhart is very handsome, quite unlike his picture in *Peter's Letters.*

When we wakened in the morning, the whole scene of the preceding night seemed like a dream; however, at twelve came the real Lady Scott, and we called for Scott at the Parliament House, who came out of the Courts with joyous face as if he had nothing on earth to do or to think of, but to show us Edinburgh. Seeming to enjoy it all as much as we could, he carried us to Parliament House—Advocates' Library, Castle, and Holyrood House. His conversation all the time better than anything we could see, full of *à-propos* anecdote, historic, serious or comic, just as occasion called for it, and all with a *bonhomie*, and an ease that made us forget it was any trouble even to his lameness to mount flights of eternal stairs. Chantrey's statues of Lord Melville and President Blair are admirable. There is another by Roubillac, of Duncan Forbes, which is excellent. Scott is enthusiastic about the beauties of Edinburgh, and well he may be, the most magnificent as well as the most romantic of cities.

We dined with the dear good Alisons. Mr. Alison met me at the drawing-room door, took me in his arms and gave me a hearty hug. I do not think he is much altered, only that his locks are silvered over. At this dinner were, besides his two sons and two daughters, and Mrs. Alison, Mr. and Mrs. Skene. In one of Scott's introductions to *Marmion* you will find this Mr. Skene, Mr. Hope, the Scotch Solicitor-General (it is curious the Solicitor-Generals of Scotland and Ireland should be Hope and Joy!), Dr. Brewster, and Lord Meadowbank, and Mrs. Maconachie, his wife. Mr. Alison wanted me to sit beside everybody, and I wanted to sit by him, and this I accomplished; on the other side was Mr. Hope, whose head and character

you will find in *Peter's Letters:* he was very entertaining. Sophy sat beside Dr. Brewster, and had a great deal of conversation with him.

Next day, Sunday, went to hear Mr. Alison; his fine voice but little altered. To me he appears the best preacher I have ever heard. Dined at Scott's; only his own family, his friend Skene, his wife and daughter, and Sir Henry Stewart; I sat beside Scott; I dare not attempt at this moment even to think of any of the anecdotes he told, the fragments of poetry he repeated, or the observations on national character he made, lest I should be tempted to write some of them for you, and should never end this letter, which must be ended some time or other. His strong affection for his early friends and his country gives a power and a charm to his conversation, which cannot be given by the polish of the London world and by the habit of literary conversation.

Quentin Durward was lying on the table. Mrs. Skene took it up and said, "This is really too barefaced." Scott, when pointing to the hospital built by Heriot, said, "That was built by one Heriot, you know, the jeweller, in Charles the Second's time."

There was an arch simplicity in his look, at which we could hardly forbear laughing.

June 23.

I remember, my dearest aunt, how fond you used to be of the song of Roslin Castle, and how fond my father used to be of it, from having heard you sing it when you were young. I think you charged me to see Roslin if ever I came to Scotland; this day I have seen it with Walter Scott. It is about seven miles from Edinburgh, I wish it had been twice as far; Scott was so entertaining

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and agreeable during the drive there and back again. The castle is an ugly old ruin, not picturesque, but the chapel is most beautiful, altogether the most beautiful florid Gothic I ever saw. There is infinite variety in the details of the ornaments, and yet such a unity in the whole design and appearance that we admire at once the taste and the ingenuity of the architect. I wished for you, my dear aunt, continually during parts of the walk by the river and through the woods—not during the whole, for it would have been much too long. How Walter Scott can find time to write all he writes I cannot conceive, he appears to have nothing to think of but to be amusing, and he never tires, though he is so entertaining—he far surpasses my expectation.

Mr. Lockhart is reserved and silent, but he appears to have much sensibility under this reserve. Mrs. Lockhart is very pleasing; a slight elegant figure and graceful simplicity of manner, perfectly natural. There is something most winning in her affectionate manner to her father: he dotes upon her.

To MISS LUCY EDGEWORTH.

CALLANDER, *June* 20, 1823.

Here we are! I can hardly believe we are really at the place we have so long wished to see: we have really been on Loch Katrine. We were fortunate in the day; it was neither too hot, nor too cold, nor too windy, nor too anything.

The lake was quite as beautiful as I expected, but that is telling you nothing, as you cannot know how much I expected. Sophy has made some memorandum sketches for home, though we are well aware that neither pen nor

pencil can bring before you the reality. William[1] says he does not, however, fear for Killarney, even after our having seen this. Here are no arbutus, but plenty of soft birch, and twinkling aspen, and dark oak. On one side of the lake the wood has been within these few years cut down. Walter Scott sent to offer the proprietor £500 for the trees on one spot, if he would spare them; but the offer came two days too late; the trees were stripped of their bark before his messenger arrived. To us, who never saw this rock covered with trees, it appeared grand in its bare boldness and in striking contrast to the wooded island opposite. Tell Fanny that, upon the whole, I think Farnham lakes as beautiful as Loch Katrine; as to mere beauty, perhaps superior: but where is the lake of our own, or any other times, that has such delightful power over the imagination by the recollections it raises? As we were rowed along, our boatman, happily our only guide, named to us the points we most wished to see; quietly named them, without being asked, and seemingly with a full belief that he was telling us plain facts, without any flowers of speech. "There's the place on that rock, see yonder, where the king blew his horn." "And there's the place where the Lady of the Lake landed." "And there is the Silver Strand, where you see the white pebbles in the little bay yonder."

He landed us just at the spot where the lady

> From underneath an aged oak,
> That slanted from the islet rock,

shot her little skiff to the silver strand on the opposite side. When William asked him if the king's dead horse

[1] William, one of Miss Edgeworth's half-brothers, had joined his sisters at Edinburgh.

had been found, he smiled, and said he only knew that bones had been found near where the king's horse died, but he could not be sure that they were the bones of King James's good steed. However, he seemed quite as clear of the existence of the Lady of the Lake, and of all her adventures, as of the existence of Benledi and Benvenue, and the Trossachs. He showed us the place on the mountain of Benvenue, where formerly there was no means of ascent but by the ladders of broom and hazel twigs, where the king climbed,

> with footing nice,
> A far-projecting precipice.

At the inn the mistress of the house lent me a copy of the *Lady of the Lake*, which I took out with me and read while we were going to the lake, and while Sophy was drawing. We saw an eagle hovering, and, moreover, Sophy spied some tiny sea-larks flitting close to the shore, and making their little, faint cry. Returning, we marked the place where the armed Highlanders started up from the furzebrake before King James, when Roderic Dhu sounded his horn, and we settled which was the spot at

> Clan Alpine's outmost guard,

where Roderic Dhu's safe conduct ceased, and where the king and he had their combat.

I forgot to mention a little incident, which, though very trifling, struck me at the moment. As I was walking on by myself on the road by the river-side leading to the lake, I came up to a Highlander who was stretched on the grass under a bush, while two little boys in tartan caps were playing beside him. I stopped to talk to the children, showed them my watch, and, holding it to their ears, asked

if they had ever seen the inside of a watch. They did not answer, but they did not seem surprised, nor were they in the least shy. I asked the man if they were his children.

"Mine! oh no! they are the sons of Glengyle—the Laird of Glengyle, he who lives at the upper end of the lake yonder—M'Greggor, that is, *the* M'Greggor, the chief of the M'Greggor clan."

Rob Roy and his wife and children rose up before my imagination. Times have finely changed. It may be a satisfaction to you, and all who admire Rob Roy, to know that his burial-place is in a pretty, peaceful green valley, where none will disturb him; and all will remember him for ages, thanks to Walter Scott, a man he never kenned of, nor any of his second-sighted seers. By the bye, Harriet on our journey read *Rob Roy* to me, and I liked it ten times better than at the first reading. My eagerness for the story being satisfied, I could stop to admire the beauty of the writing: this happens to many, I believe, on a second perusal of Scott's works.

FINISHED AT TYNDRUM.

Very good inn at Callander, and another at Loch Katrine—both raised by the genius of Scott as surely and almost as quickly as the slave of the lamp raises the palace of Aladdin. We spent one day and part of another at Callander and Loch Katrine, and yesterday went to, and slept at, Killin, along a very beautiful, fine, wild, romantic road. At Killin took a very pretty walk before tea, of about two miles and a half, and back again, to see a waterfall, which fully answered our expectations: you see, I am very strong. I had taken another walk in the morning to see the Bridge of Brackland, another beautiful waterfall,

with a six-inch bridge over a chasm of rocks, which looked as if they had been built together to imitate nature.

We are reading *Reginald Dalton*, and like it very much, the second volume especially, which will be very useful, I think, and is very interesting. I am sure Mr. Lockhart describes his own wife's singing when he describes Ellen's.

We hope to reach King's House to-night, and at Inverness we hope to find letters from home. We are all well and happy, and this I am sure is the most agreeable thing I can end with.

To MISS RUXTON.

INVERNESS, BENNET'S HOTEL, *July* 3, 1823.

I sent a shabby note to my aunt some days ago, merely to tell her that we had seen Roslin; and Sophy wrote from Fort William of our visit to Fern Tower: good house, fine place; Sir David Baird a fine old soldier, without an arm, but with a heart and a head: warm temper, as eager about every object, great or small, as a boy of fifteen. He swallows me, though an authoress, wonderful well.

Our Highland tour has afforded me and my companions great pleasure; Sophy has enjoyed it thoroughly. William has had a number of objects in his own line to interest him. From Fort William, which is close to Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in Britain, we went to see a natural or artificial curiosity called the Parallel Roads. On each side of a valley called Glenroy, through which the river Roy runs, there appear several lines of terraces at different heights, corresponding to each other on each side of the valley at the same height. These terrace-roads are not quite horizontal; they slope a little from the mountains. The learned are at this moment fighting, in writing, much

about these roads. Some will have it that, in the days of Fingal, the Fingalians made them for hunting-roads, to lie in ambush and shoot the deer from these long lines. Others suppose that the roads were made by the subsiding of a lake, which at different periods sank in this valley, and at last made its way out. The roads, however made, are well worth seeing. We had a most agreeable guide, not a professed guide, but a Highlander of the Macintosh clan, an enthusiast for the beauties of his own country, and, like the Swiss Chamouni guides, quite a well-informed and, moreover, a fine-looking man, with an air of active, graceful independence; of whom it might be said or sung, "*He's clever in his walking.*" He spoke English correctly, but as a foreign language, with *book* choice of expressions; no colloquial or vulgar phrases. He often seemed to take time to translate his thoughts from the Gaelic into English. He knew Scott's works, *Rob Roy* especially, and knew all the theories about the Parallel Roads, and explained them sensibly; and gave us accounts of the old family feuds between his own Macintosh clan and the Macdonalds, pointing to places where battles were fought, with a zeal which proved the feudal spirit still lives in its ashes. When he found we were Irish, he turned to me, and all reserve vanishing from his countenance, with brightening eyes he said, as he laid his hand on his breast, "And you are Irish! Now I know that, I would do ten times as much for you if I could than when I thought you were Southerns or English. We think the Irish have, like ourselves, more spirit." He talked of Ossian, and said the English could not give the *force* of the original Gaelic. He sang a Gaelic song for us, to a tune like "St. Patrick's Day in the Morning." He called St. Patrick Phaedrig, by which name I did not recognise him; and our Highlander exclaimed, "Don't

you know your own saint?" Sophy sang the tune for him, with which he was charmed; and when he heard William call her Sophy, he said to himself, "Sophia Western."

The next day we took a beautiful walk to the territory and near the residence of Lochiel, through a wood where groups of clansmen and clanswomen were barking trees that had been cut down; and the faggoting and piling the bark was as picturesque as heart could wish.

This day's journey was through fine wild Highland scenery, where rocks and fragments of rocks were tumbled upon each other, as if by giants in a passion, and now and then by giants playing at bowls with huge round bowls. These roads—some of them for which we "lift up our eyes and bless Marshal Wade," and some made by Telford, the vast superiority in the laying out of which William has had the pleasure of pointing out to his sisters—beautifully wind over hill and through valley, by the sides of streams and lakes. We saw the eight locks joining together on the Caledonian Canal, called Neptune's Stairs; and at another place on the canal William, who had been asleep, *instinctively* wakened just in time to see a dredging machine at work: we stopped the carriage, and walked down to look at it: took a boat and rowed round the vessel, and went on board and saw the machinery. A steam-engine works an endless chain of buckets round and round upon a platform with rollers. The buckets have steel mouth-pieces, some with quite sharp projecting lips, which cut into the sand and gravelly bottom, and scoop up what fills each bucket. At the bottom of each are cullender holes, through which the water drains off as the buckets go on and pass over the platform and empty themselves on an inclined plane, down which the contents fall into a boat,

which rows away when full, and deposits the contents wherever wanted. If you ever looked at a book at Edgeworthstown called *Machines Approuvés*, you would have the image of this machine. It brought my father's drawings of the Rhone machine before my eyes.

The whole day's drive was delightful—mountains behind mountains as far as the eye could reach, in every shade, from darkest to palest Indian-ink cloud colour; an ocean of mountains, with perpetually changing foreground of rocks, sometimes bare as ever they were born, sometimes wooded better than ever the hand of mortal taste clothed a mountain in reality or in picture, with oak, aspen, and the beautiful pendant birch.

At Fort Augustus the house was painting, and the beds looked wretched; but all was made plausible with the help of fires and fair words, and we slept as well, or better, than kings and queens. As to any real inconvenience at Highland inns, we have met with none; always good fish, good eggs, good butter, and good humour.

Next day we had another delightful drive: saw the Fall of Foyers: fine scrambling up and down to a rock, and on this rock such huge tumbledown stones, like Druids' temples, half-fallen, half-suspended. The breath was almost taken away and head dizzy looking at them above and the depth below; one could hardly believe we stood safe. Yet here we are safe and sound at Inverness, the Capital of the North, as Scott calls it. This Bennet's Hotel, where we are lodged, is as good as any in London or Edinburgh, and cleaner than almost any I ever was in, with a waiter the perfection of intelligence. We are going to see a place called the Dream, the name translated from the Gaelic.

I forgot to tell you that, when at Edinburgh, we went to see Sir James and Lady Foulis's friends, the Jardines, who were also friends of Henry's. They are in a very pretty house, Laverock Bank, a few miles from Edinburgh. We "felicity hunters" have found more felicity than such hunters usually meet with.

To MISS LUCY EDGEWORTH.

KINROSS, *July* 23, 1823.

I left off in my yesterday's letter to my mother just as we were changing horses at Dunkeld, at six o'clock in the evening, to go on to Perth; but I had in that note arrived prematurely at Dunkeld, and had not time to fill up the history of our day. Be pleased, therefore, to go back to Moulinan, and see us eat luncheon; for, in spite of Mr. Grant's contempt of these *bon-vivant* details, habit will not allow me to depart from my Swiss, Parisian, and English practice of giving the bill of fare.

First course, cold: two roast chickens, better never were; a ham, finer never seen, even at my mother's luncheons; pickled salmon, and cold boiled round.

Second course, hot: a large dish of little trout from the river; new potatoes, and, as I had professed to be unable to venture on new potatoes, a dish of mashed potatoes for me; fresh greens, with toast over, and poached eggs.

Then, a custard pudding, a gooseberry tart, and plenty of Highland cream—*highly* superior to Lowland—and butter, ditto.

And for all this how much did we pay? Six shillings.

Our drive in evening sunshine from Moulinan to Dunkeld was delightful, along the banks, no longer of the dear little, sparkling, foaming, fretting Garry, but of the

broad, majestic, quiet, dark bottle-green coloured Tay; the road a perfect gravel walk; the bank, all the way down between us and the river, copsewood, with now and then a clump of fine tall larch, or a single ash or oak, with spreading branches showing the water beneath; the mountain side chiefly oak and alder, a tree which I scarcely knew till Sophy *mentioned* it to me; sometimes the wood broken with glades of fern, heath, and young *stubble* oaks, all the way up to white rocks on the summit; the young shoots of these stubble oaks tinted with pink, so as to have in the evening sun the appearance of autumn rich tints; and between these oaks and the green fern and broom a giant race of foxglove, which I verily believe, from the root to the spike, would measure four good feet, all rich in bells of brightest crimson, so bright that they crimsoned the whole bank.

All these ten miles of wooded road run, I understand, through the territory of the Duke of Athol. Now I see his possessions, I am sure I do not wonder the lady left her lack-gold lover in the lurch for "Athol's duke." Along the whole road he has raised a footpath, beautifully gravelled. Oh! how I wish our walks had one inch off the surface of this footpath, or that the African magician, or the English equally potent magician of steam, could convey to my mother's *elbow* in the Dingle one yard of one bank of the gravel which here wastes its pebbles on the mountain side! How in a trice she would summon round her her choice spirits, Briny Duffy, Micky Mulheeran, and Mackin, and how they would with shovel and loy fall to!

Through the wood at continual openings we saw glimpses of beautiful paths or gravelled walks, which this munificent duke has made through his woods for the accommodation of the public. I forgive him for being

like an over-ripe Orleans plum, and for not saying a word, good or bad, the day we met him at Mr. Morrit's.

At Dunkeld, alas! we bade adieu to the dear Highlands. I have not time now to tell you of Killiecrankie and Dundee's Stone.

Arrived at Perth at nine o'clock: tea, with silver urn and silver candlesticks, and all luxurious: cold chicken, ham, and marmalade inclusive.

The drive from Perth this morning to Kinross is beautiful, but in a more civilised and less romantic way than our Highland scenery. We are now within view of Lochleven, Queen Mary's island.

During this morning's drive, Sophy sang "In April, when primroses blow" most charmingly. Her singing was much admired in Edinburgh by Sir Walter Scott, etc., but still more at Mrs. Macpherson's. One day, she sang several of Moore's melodies, and some Scotch songs. Mrs. Macpherson, who is excessively fond of music, was so charmed, she told me afterwards she never heard a voice she thought so sweet and clear, and unaffected. She rejoiced to hear it without music, or any accompaniment that could drown it, or spoil its distinct simplicity. She observed what a charm there is in her distinct pronunciation of the words, in her just emphasis, and in her never forgetting the words, or keeping you in any anxiety for her, or requiring to be pressed. "How delightful," said she, "to have such an accomplishment, such a power to please always with her, without requiring instruments, or music-books, or any preparation." I was afraid her singing of Scotch might not suit the Scotch, and she never ventured it till we were at Mrs. Macpherson's, who was quite charmed with it. Indeed, her soft voice is very different from the screeching some songstresses make, with vast execution. I am particularly

full of the pleasure of Sophy's singing at present, because I felt so much delight from it when I was just recovering from my illness. I did not think it was in the nature of my body or soul to feel so much pleasure from singing or music; but the fact is as I tell you. After three nights of pulse at ninety-six and delirium, in which I one night saw the arches of Roslin Chapel, with roses of such brilliant light crowning them that I shut my eyes to avoid the blaze; and another night was haunted with the words "a soldier[1] of the forty-second has lost his portmanteau," and continual marching and countermarching, and rummaging of Highland officers and privates in search of it, and an officer laughing at me and saying, "Don't you know this is a common Highland saying, A soldier of the forty-second has lost his portmanteau? It means"—but he never could or would tell me what it meant, when another officer said, "Madam, there is a Lowland saying to match it"; and this also I could never hear. Another night the words of a song called the "Banks of Aberfeldy" crossed my imagination, and a fat, rubicund man stood before me, continually telling me that he was "John Aberfeldy, the happy." I cannot tell you how this John Aberfeldy tormented me. After these three horrible nights, when I awoke with my tongue so parched I could not speak till a spoonful of lemon-juice was inserted, I asked Sophy to sing, and she directly sang, "Dear harp of my country." I never shall forget the sort of pleasure; it soothed, it "rapt my" *willing* not my "*imprisoned* soul in elysium," and I was so happy to feel I could again follow a rational chain of ideas, and comprehend the words of the beautiful poetry, to which music added

[1] Miss Edgeworth had been reading Stewart's *History of Highland Regiments* the day before she was taken ill with an attack of erysipelas.

such a charm and force. She sang, "Believe me, if all those endearing young charms," and "Farewell, but whenever you welcome the hour," and "Oh, Nanny, wilt thou gang wi' me?" and "Vive Henri Quatre!" which I love for the sake of Mrs. Henry Hamilton, and for the sake of Lady Longford's saying to me, with a mother's pride and joy in her enthusiastic eyes, "My Caroline will sing to me at any time, in any inn, or anywhere." I am sure I may say the same of my sister Sophy, who will sing for me at an inn by my sick bed, and with more power of voice than all the stimulus of company and flattery can draw from other young ladies. I never wish to hear a fine singer; I always agree with Dr. Johnson in wishing that the difficulties had been impossibilities, with all their falsettos and tortures of affectation to which they put themselves. How I hate them, and all the aimings at true Italian pronunciation and true Italian manner, which after all is, nine times out of ten, quite erroneous, and such as the Italians themselves would laugh at, or most probably no more comprehend than I did De Leuze repeating the "Botanic Garden": I was just going to ask what language it was, when my mother, good at need, saved me from the irreparable blunder by whispering, "It is English." The words were, I believe, all right, but the accents were all thrown wrong. As Lady Spencer said, "It is wonderful that foreigners never *by accident* throw the accents right." Milton says:

> For eloquence the soul, song moves the sense;

but if he had heard Moore's poetry sung by Sophy, he would have acknowledged that song moved not only the sense, but the soul.

I have dilated upon this to you, my dear Lucy, because you have at times felt the same about Sophy's singing.

During my illness, day and night, whenever pain and delirium allowed me rational thought, you and your admirable patience recurred to my mind. I said to myself, "How can she bear it so well, and in her young days, the spring-time of life? how admirable is her resignation and cheerfulness! never a cross word, or cross look, or impatient gesture, and for four years; when I, with all my strength of experience and added philosophy from education, moan and groan aloud, and can scarce bear ten days' illness, with two really angel sisters to nurse me, and watch my 'asking eye'!" You have at least the reward of my perfect esteem and admiration, after comparison with myself, the only true standard by which I can estimate your worth.

Miss Edgeworth and her sisters spent a most happy fortnight with Sir Walter Scott and his family. "Never," writes his son-in-law, "did I see a brighter day at Abbotsford than that on which Miss Edgeworth first arrived there: never can I forget her look and accent when she was received by him at his archway, and exclaimed: 'Everything about you is exactly what one ought to have had wit enough to dream!'"

Sir Walter delighted in Miss Sophy Edgeworth's singing, especially of Moore's Irish melodies. "Moore's the man for songs," he said. "Campbell can write an ode, and I can make a ballad; but Moore beats us all at a song." Sir Walter was then at the height of his fame and "in

the glory of his prime," surrounded by his family; both his sons were at home, and his daughter Anne; and he had then staying with him his nephew, "Little Walter." Mr. and Mrs. Lockhart were living at Chiefswood, but they were continually at Abbotsford, or some of the party were continually at Chiefswood; and Sir Walter's joyous manner and life of mind, his looks of fond pride in his children, the pleasantness of his easy manners, the gay walks, the evening conversations, and the drives in the sociable, enchanted Miss Edgeworth. In these drives the flow of story, poetry, wit, and wisdom never ceased; Sir Walter sitting with his dog Spicer on his lap, and Lady Scott with her dog Ourisk on her lap.

Lady Scott one day expressed her surprise that Scott and Miss Edgeworth had not met when the latter was in Edinburgh in 1803. "Why," said Sir Walter, with one of his queer looks, "you forget, my dear, Miss Edgeworth was not a lion then, and my mane, you know, was not grown at all."[1]

[1] *Life of George Ticknor.*

MARIA *to* MISS HONORA EDGEWORTH.

ABBOTSFORD, *July* 31, 1823.

I take a pen merely to say that I will not write! I have so much to say, that I dare not trust myself, as I am still so far from strong, I must not venture to play tricks with that health which it cost my dear, kind nurses so much to preserve. I am as careful of myself as any creature can be without becoming an absolute, selfish egotist. Lady Scott is really so watchful and careful of me, that even when my own family guardian angels are not on either or both sides of me, I can do no wrong, and can come to no harm.

It is quite delightful to see Scott in his family in the country: breakfast, dinner, supper, the same flow of kindness, fondness, and genius, far, far surpassing his works, his letters, and all my hopes and imagination. His castle of Abbotsford is magnificent, but I forget it in thinking of him.

To MR. RUXTON.

ABBOTSFORD, *Aug.* 9, 1823.

I remember that you requested one of our party to write a few lines from Abbotsford. I think I mentioned to my aunt or Sophy the impression which I first experienced from Sir Walter Scott's great simplicity of manner, joined to his wonderful superiority of intellect. This impression has been strengthened by all I have seen of him since. In living with him in the country, I have particularly liked his behaviour towards his variety of guests, of all ranks, who come to his hospitable castle. Many of these are artists, painters, architects, mechanists, antiquarians, people who look up to him for patronage—none of them permitted to be hangers on or parasites; his manners perfectly kind and

courteous, yet such as to command respect; and I never heard any one attempt to flatter him. I never saw an author less of an author in his habits. This I early observed, but have been the more struck with it the longer I have been with him. He has, indeed, such variety of occupations, that he has not time to think of his own works: how he has time to write them is the wonder. You would like him for his love of trees; a great part of his time out of doors is taken up in pruning his trees. I have within this hour heard a gentleman say to him, "You have had a good deal of experience in planting, Sir Walter; do you advise much thinning, or not?"—"I should advise much thinning, but little at a time. If you thin much at a time, you let in the wind, and hurt your trees."

I hope to show you a sketch of Abbotsford Sophy has made—better than any description. Besides the Abbey of Melrose, we have seen many interesting places in this neighbourhood. To-day we have been a delightful drive through Ettrick Forest, and to the ruins of Newark—the hall of Newark, where the ladies bent their necks of snow to hear the Lay of the Last Minstrel. Though great part of Ettrick Forest was cut down years ago, yet much of it has grown up again to respectable height, and many most beautiful oak, ash, and alder trees remain. We had a happy walk by the river, and after refreshing ourselves with a luncheon in a summer-house beautifully situated, we went to look at the ruins of Newark. It was a pity that this fine old building was let to go to ruin, which it has done only within the last seventy years. The late Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch, to whom it belonged, had in their youth lived abroad, and were so ignorant about their own estate in Scotland, that when they first came to live here they supposed there were no trees, and no wood they thought

could be had, and brought with them, among other things, a barrel full of skewers for the cook.

It is very agreeable to observe how many friends of long standing Scott has in this neighbourhood: they have been here, and we have been at their houses: very good houses, and the style of living excellent. Except one Prussian prince and one Swiss baron, no grand foreign visitors have been here; indeed, this house is in such a state of painting and papering, and carpenters finishing new rooms and chasing the inhabitants out of the old, that it was impossible to have much company.

Sir Walter's eldest son was here for some days—now gone back to Sandhurst; he is excessively shy, very handsome, not at all literary, but he has sense and honourable principle, and is very grateful to those who were kind to him in Ireland. His younger brother, Charles, who is now at home, has more easy manners, is more conversible, and has more of his father's literary taste. I am sorry to say we are to leave Abbotsford the day after to-morrow; but the longer we stay the more sorry we shall feel to go. We had intended to have paid a visit to Lady Selkirk at St. Mary's Isle, but this would be a hundred miles out of our way, and I have no time for it, which I regret, as I liked very much the little I saw of Lady Selkirk in London.

After visits at Glasgow and Dalwharran, Miss Edgeworth and her sisters returned to Ireland.

To MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Nov.* 20, 1823.

It is a long time since I have written to you, always waiting a day longer for somebody's coming or going, or sailing or landing. You ask what I am doing: nothing, but reading and idling, and paving a gutter and yard to Honora's pig-stye, and school-house. What have I been reading? The "Siege of Valencia," by Mrs. Hemans, which is an hour too long, but it contains some of the most beautiful poetry I have read for years. I have read Quin's letters from Spain, entertaining; the review of it in the *Quarterly* is by Blanco White. Dr. Holland's letters continue to be as full of information and interest as ever, though he is a married man. Tell Sophy that the subject of electricity and electro-magnetism is every day affording new facts, and all the philosophers on the Continent are busy about it. Sir Humphry Davy had a narrow escape of breaking his neck by a fall down stairs, but he is not hurt, *tout au contraire.* I had a letter, written in very good English, the other day from M. de Staël; he is now in London, and tells me the French and the Holy Alliance are tyrannising sadly at Geneva, and have ordered all the Italian patriots who had taken refuge there to decamp. There is one of these, Count Somebody or other, whose name I cannot persuade myself to get up to look for, whom M. de Staël wishes I would take by the hand in London, and what I am to do with him when I have him by the hand I don't know.

I had a letter from Walter Scott, who has been delighted with the history of Caraboo,[1] which I sent to him: a pamphlet published at the time. He says that nobody with

[1] Caraboo is alluded to in *St. Ronan's Well*, published in the autumn of this year. Sir Walter had never heard of her till Miss Edgeworth told her history to him at Abbotsford.

a reasonable head could attempt to calculate the extent of popular credulity, and observes that she, like all the great cheats who have imposed upon mankind, was touched with insanity, half knave, half mad, at last the dupe of her own acting of enthusiasm.

Prince Hohenlohe and the pamphlets, pro and con, occupy us much. Crampton's second edition of his I think excellent. Some very curious facts have been brought out of the effect of the imagination upon the bodily health. And while Scott is writing novels to entertain the world, and the philosophers in France trying experiments on electro-magnetism, Davy tumbling down stairs, and Denham and Co. in Africa looking for the Niger, here is all London rushing out to look at the cottage in which a swindler lived who murdered another swindler, and buying bits of the sack in which the dead body was put! Have your newspapers given what we have had in the *Morning Chronicle*? views of Roberts's cottage and the pond with Thurtell and Hunt dragging the body out of it? Shakespear understood John Bull right well, and always gave him plenty of murders and dead bodies. I am glad there are no Irishmen in this base as well as savage gang.

To MISS RUXTON.

PAKENHAM HALL, *Jan.* 21.

We, my mother, Lovell, Fanny, and I, came here yesterday, glad to see Lord Longford surrounded by his friends in old Pakenham Hall hospitable style,—he always cordial, unaffected, and agreeable. The house has been completely new-modelled, chimneys taken down from top to bottom, rooms turned about from lengthways to broadways, thrown into one another, and out of one another, and the result is that there is a comfortable excellent

drawing-room, dining-room, and library, and the bed-chambers are admirable. Mrs. Smyth, of Gaybrook, and her daughter are here, and Mr. Knox; and I have been so lucky as to be seated next to him at dinner yesterday, and at breakfast this morning; he is very agreeable when he speaks, and when he is silent it is "silence that speaks."

Lady Longford[1] has been very attentive to us. She has the finest and most happy open-faced children I ever saw —not the least troublesome, yet perfectly free and at their ease with the company and with their parents.

A box will be left in Dublin for you on Monday morning. There is no telling you how happy I have been getting ready and packing and fussing about the said box for you, flying about the house from the library to the garret. And all for what? When Sophy, whom I beg to be the unpacker, opens it, you will see a certain dabbed-up crooked pasteboard tray in which are four frills for you: I hemmed every inch of them myself, to give them the only value they could have in your eyes.

To MRS. BANNATYNE.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Feb.* 16, 1824.

My dear Mr. and Mrs. Bannatyne—my dear Mrs. Starke and Miss Bannatyne, and Andrew and Dugald, and all of you kind friends, put your heads close together to hear a piece of intelligence which will, I know, rejoice your kind hearts.

Our dear Sophy and *your* dear Sophy is going to be married to a person whom her mother, and every one of her own family completely approve, who has been tenderly attached to her for some time, whose principles, understanding, manners, and honourable manly character are

[1] Georgiana, daughter of the first Earl Beauchamp.

such as to deserve such a wife as I may proudly say he will have in Sophy. His birth, family connections, and fortune are all such as we could wish. The gentleman is a cousin of our own Captain Barry Fox; he is an officer, but will probably leave the army, and settle in his own country; we hope within reach of us. He has been so kind and considerate about poor Lucy, so anxious not to deprive her too suddenly of her beloved, and best of nurses, that he has endeared himself the more to us all.

To MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *March* 18, 1824.

The indissoluble knot is tied! What an awful ceremony it is! What an awful deed! How can parents bear to be at the weddings of their children where it is not a marriage of their own free choice? and how can a woman herself pronounce that solemn vow when she is marrying for money, or for grandeur, or from any earthly motive but the pure heart?—a purer heart than my sister Sophy's I do believe never approached the altar, nor was the hand ever given more entirely with the free heart. There was no one at the wedding but our own family, Mr. Fox, Francis Fox, and William Beaufort. We six ladies went in the carriage immediately after breakfast to the church, where the gentlemen were waiting for us. The churchyard, and church of course, crowded with the poor people of the village, but as we drove out of our own lawn into Mr. Keating's, there was as little annoyance from starers as possible. William Beaufort married them, as had been Sophy's particular wish. The sun shone out with a bright promise at the moment her marriage was completed. Barry handed her into his chaise, the most commodious, prettiest, and plainest carriage I ever saw, and away they drove.

To MRS. O'BEIRNE.[1]

BLACK CASTLE, *July* 6, 1824.

In the little drawing-room at Black Castle, where we have been so often happy together; in the little drawing-room to which you have so often brought me to see my dear aunt, I now write to you, my dear friend, to tell you how much I miss you. I feel a perpetual want of that part of my happiness in this dear place which I owed to its neighbourhood to another dear place to which I cannot now bear to go. Once, and but once, in the two months I have been here have I been there; when the indispensable civility of returning a formal visit required it, and then I felt it to be as much, if not more, than I was able to do, with the composure I felt to be proper. The sitting in that red drawing-room and missing everything I had so loved—the saloon, the lawn—I really could not speak, and heartily glad I was when I got away.

My plans of going to England this summer have been all broken up: you know how, as you have heard of the death of my dear sister Anna,[2] at Florence; the account of her loss reached me just when I was joyfully expecting an answer to a letter full of projects which she never lived to read. GOD'S will be done. We expect my nieces, Anna and Mary, at Edgeworthstown as soon as they return from Italy.

[1] The Bishop of Meath died in 1823; and Mrs. O'Beirne and her daughters went to reside in England.

[2] Anna Edgeworth, Maria's whole sister, had married Dr. Beddoes in 1794.

To MISS HONORA EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *July* 17, 1824.

I hope this will find you at Cheltenham with Barry and Sophy, and Fanny; my mother and Margaret set off this fine morning for Black Castle, and Lucy is now in the dining-room, her bed aslant across the open middle window, the grass plot new-mown, and a sweet smell of fresh hay. They are drawing home the hay, and men are driving past the windows on empty cars, or leading loaded ones. The roses are still in full blow on the trellis. Aunt Bess sitting by Lucy talking of the beautiful thorns in the Phœnix Park, and I am sitting on the other side of Lucy's bed by the pillar.

Margaret Ruxton when here was eager to pay her compliments to Peggy Tuite; her husband has written for her to go to him, and she is now "torn almost in two between the wish to go to her husband and her lothness to leave her old mother." She gave Margaret and me the history of her losing and finding her wedding ring. "Sure I knew my luck would change when I found my wedding ring that I lost four years ago—down in the quarry. I went across the fields to feed the pig, and looked and looked till I was tired, and then concluded I had given it to the pig mixed up and that he had swallowed it for ever—it was a real gold ring. But the men that was clearing out the *rubbage* in the quarry found it and adjourned to the public house to share the luck of it. My brother got scent of it and went directly to inform the man that found it whose the ring was, and demanded it; he wouldn't hear of giving it back, and sold it to a pensioner there above; my brother set off with himself to the priest and told all, and the priest summoned the man and the pensioner, and

my brother, and in the presence of an honest man, Mr. Sweeny, warned the pensioner to restore the wedding ring, since my brother could tell the tokens on it. 'It's the woman's wedding ring to remind her of her conjugal duties, and it's sacrilege to take it.' But the man that sold it was hardened, and the pensioner said he had paid for it, and so says the priest to Keegan, that's the master of the quarry men, 'Turn this man out of the work, he is a bad man and he will corrupt the rest. And, Peggy Tuite, I advise you and your brother to go straight to Major Bond and summon these men.'" Then she described the trial, when Tuite "swore to the tokens where it had been crushed by a stone, and the goldsmith's mark, and the Major held it between him and the light and plainly noticed the crush and the battered marks, and handing me the ring said, 'Peggy Tuite, this is your ring sure enough.'"

To MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *August* 16, 1824.

We have heard from Sophy Fox, who tells us that they have been delighted with their journey to Aberystwith, especially the devil's bridge. Can you tell me why the devil has so many bridges, sublime and beautiful, in every country of the habitable world? Ingénieur des Ponts et Chaussées to his Satanic majesty would be a place of great business, profit and glory, and would require a man of first-rate abilities. Lucy has painted a beautiful portrait of her bullfinch, picking at a bunch of white currants—the currants would, I am sure, be picked by any live bird.

Tell me how you like *Haji Baba.*

To MISS HONORA EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *August* 28, 1824.

I am impatient to set my dear Aunt Mary's[1] mind free from the anxiety I am sure she feels about her decision to stay in England this winter; whatever disappointment and regret I felt was mitigated by her beautifully kind and tender note.

Your entertaining account of the archery meeting at Lord Bagot's came yesterday evening. What a magnificent entertainment, and in what good taste! It was a delightful house for a *fête champêtre.*

The Roman Catholic Bishop, M'Gaurin, held a confirmation the day before yesterday, and dined here on a God-send haunch of venison. Same day Mr. Hunter arrived, and Mr. Butler came with young Mr. Hamilton, an "admirable Crichton" of eighteen; a real prodigy of talents, who Dr. Brinkley says may be a second Newton—quite gentle and simple. Mr. and Mrs. Napier arrived on Wednesday, and spent two most agreeable days with us; he is an extremely well-informed man, and both are perfectly well-bred. Mr. Butler and Mr. Hamilton suited them delightfully. Mr. Butler and Mr. Napier found they were both Oxford men, and took to each other directly. Mr. Napier's conversation is quite superior and easy. Those two days put me in mind of former times. Hunter is very happy here in spite of his cockney prejudices; he says *Harry and Lucy* must be ready by October.

[1] After the death of her sister Charlotte in 1822, Mrs. Mary Sneyd resided occasionally with her brother in England till 1828, when she returned finally to Edgeworthstown, where she remained for the rest of her life, deeply attached to all the family, but regarding her niece Honora as peculiarly her own child.

To MRS. RUXTON.

Jan. 1, 1825.

A happy new year to you, my dearest aunt,—to you to whom I now look as much as I can to any one now living, for the rays of pleasure that I expect to gild my bright evening of life. As we advance in life we become more curious, more fastidious in gilding and gilders; we find to our cost that all that glitters is not gold, and your every-day bungling carvers and gilders will not do. Our *evening-gilders* must be more skilful than those who flashed and daubed away in the morning of life, and gilt with any tinsel, the weather-cock for the morning sun.

You may perceive, my dear aunt, by my having got so finely to the weather-cock, and the rising sun, that I am out of the hands of all my dear apothecaries, and playing away again with a superfluity of life. (*N.B.* I am surprisingly prudent.) Honora's cough has almost subsided, and Lucy can sit upright the greater part of the day. "GOD bless the mark!" as Molly Bristow would say, if she heard me, "don't be bragging."

Jan. 6.

I have to give you the most cheering accounts of Honora and Lucy. Honora is now on the sofa opposite to me, working with her candle beside her on a bracket—my new year's gift to the sofas, a mahogany bracket on each side of the chimney-piece to fold up or down, and large enough to hold a candlestick and a teacup or work-box. Mary Beddoes and I are on the sofa next the door; Honora and Anna on the other, and somebody sitting in the middle talking by turns to each sofa. Who can that be? Not Harriet, for tea is over and she has seceded to Lucy's room—not my mother, nor William, nor Mrs.

Beaufort, nor Louisa, for the carriage has carried them away some hours ago, poor souls, and full-dressed bodies, to dine at Ardagh. But who can this Unknown be? A gentleman it must be to constitute the happiness of two sofas of ladies.

My nephew, Henry Beddoes! and the joy of ladies he certainly will be, not merely of aunts and sisters, but of all who can engage or be engaged by prepossessing manners and appearance, and the promise of all that is amiable and intelligent. I am delighted with him, and he would charm you.

Lady Bathurst has done me another good turn for Fanny Stewart, that is, for her husband; there was a charming letter from Fanny Stewart a few days ago. I send for your amusement the famous little *Valoe* in its elegantissimo binding, and Lady Bathurst's letter about it, elegantissima also. You remember, I hope, the story of its publication, written by a governess of the Duchess of Beaufort's, assisted by all the conclave of quality young-lady-governesses, with little traits of character of their pupils. The authoress sent it to the Duchess of Beaufort, asking permission to publish and dedicate it to her Grace. The Duchess never read it, and returned it to the Governess with a compliment, and, "publish it by all means, and dedicate it to me." Out came the publication; and though each young lady was flattered, yet all quarrelled with the mode of compliment, and in many there was a little touch of blame, which moved their or their mothers' anger, and with one accord they attacked the Duchess of Beaufort for her permission to publish, and the edition was all bought up in a vast hurry.

In a few days I trust—you know I am a great truster—that you will receive a packet franked by Lord Bathurst,

containing only a little pocket-book—*Friendship's Offering, for* 1825, dizened out; I fear you will think it too fine for your taste, but there is in it, as you will find, the old "Mental Thermometer," which was once a favourite of yours. You will wonder how it came there—simply thus. Last autumn came by the coach a parcel containing just such a book as this for last year, and a letter from Mr. Lupton Relfe—a foreigner settled in London—and he prayed in most polite bookseller strain that I would look over my portfolio for some trifle for this book for 1825. I might have looked over "my portfolio" till doomsday, as I have not an unpublished scrap, except "Take for Granted."[1] But I recollected the "Mental Thermometer," and that it had never been *out*, except in the *Irish Farmer's Journal*—not known in England. So I routed in the garret under pyramids of old newspapers, with my mother's prognostics, that I never should find it, and loud prophecies that I should catch my death, which I did not, but dirty and dusty, and cobwebby, I came forth after two hours' grovelling with my object in my hand! Cut it out, added a few lines of new end to it, and packed it off to Lupton Relfe, telling him that it was an old thing written when I was sixteen. Weeks elapsed, and I heard no more, when there came a letter exuberant in gratitude, and sending a parcel containing six copies of the new Memorandum book, and a most beautiful twelfth edition of Scott's *Poetical Works*, bound in the most elegant manner, and with most beautifully engraved frontispieces and vignettes, and a £5 note. I was quite ashamed—but I have done all I could for him by giving the *Friendship's Offerings* to all the fine people I could think of. The set of Scott's Works made a nice

[1] "Take for Granted" was an idea which Maria never worked out into a story, though she had made many notes for it.

New Year's gift for Harriet; she had seen this edition at Edinburgh and particularly wished for it. The £5 I have sent to Harriet Beaufort to be laid out in books for Fanny Stewart. Little did I think the poor old "Thermometer" would give me so much pleasure.

Here comes the carriage rolling round. I feel guilty; what will my mother say to me, so long a letter at this time of night?—Yours affectionately in all the haste of guilt, conscience-stricken: that is, found out.

No—all safe, all innocent—because *not found out.*

Finis.

By the author of *Moral Tales* and *Practical Education.*

Feb. 16.

I hope my dearest aunt will not disdain the work of my little bungling hands. The vandykes of this apron are such as Vandyke would scorn; poor little pitiful things they be! and will be in rags in a fortnight no doubt. But if you knew the pains I have taken with them, and what pleasure I have had in doing them, even all wrong, you would hang them round you with satisfaction. By the time it is completely *roved* away I shall be with you and *bind* it over to its good behaviour, so that it shall never rove *again* me. Love me and laugh at me as you have done many is the year.

The crocuses and snowdrops in my garden are beautiful; my green-board-edged beds and green trellis make it absolutely a wooden paradise.

I forgot to boast that I was up for three mornings at seven *vandyking.*

Henry Beddoes told us that Lord Byron was extremely beloved and highly thought of by all whom he heard speak of him at Missolonghi, both Greeks and his own country-

men. He had regained public esteem by his latter conduct. The place in which he died was not the worst inn's worst room, but an absolute hovel, without any bed of any kind; he was lying on a sack.

March 15.

You have probably seen in the papers the death of our admirable friend Mrs. Barbauld. I have copied for you her last letter to me and some beautiful lines written in her eightieth year. There is a melancholy elegance and force of thought in both. Elegance and strength—qualities rarely uniting without injury to each other, combine most perfectly in her style, and this rare combination, added to their classical purity, form, perhaps, the distinguishing characteristics of her writings. England has lost a great writer, and we a most sincere friend.

To MISS HONORA EDGEWORTH.

BLACK CASTLE, *May* 10, 1825.

Your list of presentation copies of *Harry and Lucy*, and your reasons for giving each, diverted me very much. Sophy and Margaret and I laughed over it and agreed that every reason was like Mr. Plunket's speech, "unanswerable."

To MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *July* 9, 1825.

With my whole soul I thank you for your most touching letter[1] to my mother, so full of true resignation to GOD's will, and of those feelings which He has implanted in the human heart for our greatest happiness and our greatest

[1] On the death of Mr. Ruxton.

trials. "Fifty-five years!" How much is contained in those words of yours! I loved him dearly, and well I might, most kind he ever was to me, and I felt all his excellent qualities, his manners, his delightful temper. How little did I think when last I saw his kind looks bent upon me that it was for the last time!

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *August* 1825.

Sir Walter Scott, punctual to his promise, arrived on Friday in good time for dinner; he brought with him Miss Scott and Mr. Crampton. I am glad that kind Crampton had the reward of this journey; though frequently hid from each other by clouds of dust in their open carriage, they had as they told us never ceased talking. They like each other as much as two men of so much genius and so much benevolence should, and we rejoice to be the bond of union.

Scarcely had Crampton shaken the dust from his shoes when he said, "Before I eat, and what is more, before I wash my hands, I must see Lucy." He says that he has now no doubt that, please GOD, and in all the humility of hope and gratitude I repeat it, she will perfectly recover.

Captain and Mrs. Scott and Mr. Lockhart were detained in Dublin, and did not come till eleven o'clock, and my mother had supper, and fruit, and everything refreshing for them. Mrs. Scott is perfectly unaffected and rather pretty, with a sweet confiding expression of countenance and fine mild most loving eyes.

Sir Walter delights the hearts of every creature who sees, hears, and knows him. He is most benignant as well as most entertaining; the noblest and the gentlest of lions, and his face, especially the lower part of it, is excessively like a lion; he and Mr. Crampton and Mr. Jephson were

delightful together. The school band, after dinner by moonlight, playing Scotch tunes, and the boys at leap-frog delighted Sir Walter. Next day we went to the school for a very short time and saw a little of everything, and a most favourable impression was left. It being Saturday, religious instruction was going on when we went in. Catholics, with their priest, in one room; Protestants, with Mr. Keating, in the other.

More delightful conversation I have seldom in my life heard than we have been blessed with these three days. What a touch of sorrow must mix with the pleasures of all who have had great losses! Lovell, my mother, and I, at twelve o'clock at night, joined in exclaiming, "How delightful! O! that he had lived to see and hear this!"

Maria Edgeworth and her sister Harriet accompanied Sir Walter and Miss Scott, Mr. Lockhart and Captain and Mrs. Scott to Killarney. They travelled in an open caleche of Sir Walter's, and Captain Scott's chariot, changing the combination from one carriage to another as the weather or accident suggested. When some difficulty occurred about horses Sir Walter said, "Swift, in one of his letters, when no horses were to be had, says, 'If we had but had a captain of horse to swear for us we should have had the horses at once;' now here we have the captain of horse, but the landlord is not moved even by him."

The little tour was most enjoyable, and greatly was it enjoyed. Neither Sir Walter nor Miss Edgeworth were ever annoyed with the little discomforts of travel, and they found amusement in everything, shaming all with whom they came in contact. Their boatman on the lake of Killarney told Lord Macaulay twenty years afterwards that the pleasure of rowing them had made him amends for missing a hanging that day!

Mrs. Edgeworth relates:

> The evening of the day they left Killarney, Sir Walter was unwell, and Maria was much struck by the tender affectionate attention of his son and Mr. Lockhart and their great anxiety. He was quite as usual, however, the next day, and on their arrival in Dublin, the whole party dined at Captain Scott's house in Stephen's Green; he and Mrs. Scott most hospitably inviting, besides Maria and Harriet, my two daughters, Fanny and Mrs. Barry Fox, who had just returned from Italy, and my two sons, Francis and Pakenham, who were coming home for the holidays. It happened to be Sir Walter's birthday, the 15th of August, and his health was drunk with more feeling than gaiety. He and Maria that evening bade farewell to each other, never to meet again in this world.

Twenty-five years later we find Miss Edgeworth writing to Mr. Ticknor, how, in imagination, she could still meet Sir Walter, "with all

his benign, calm expression of countenance, his eye of genius, and his mouth of humour—such as genius loved to see him. His very self I see, feeling, thinking, and about to speak."

MARIA *to* MRS. EDGEWORTH.

BLACK CASTLE, *August* 30, 1825.

I calculate that there can be no use in my writing to Dr. Holland, Killarney, at this time of day, because he must have *departed* that life. However, I write to Mr. Hallam[1] this day with a message to Dr. Holland, if there. If you learn that Dr. Holland can come to Edgeworthstown, you will of course tell me, if it be within the possibility of time and space; I would go home even for the chance of spending an hour with him; therefore be prepared for the shock of seeing me. I do hope he will in his great kindness—which is always beyond what any one ought to hope—I do hope he will contrive to go to Edgeworthstown. How delightful to have Lucy sitting up like a lady beside you!

The Lords Bective and Darnley, and Sir Marcus Somerville, and LORD knows who, are all at this moment broiling in Navan at a Catholic meeting, saying and hearing the same things that have been said and heard 100,000,000 times; one certain good will result from it that I shall have a frank for you and save you sevenpence. "I will send a number of the New Monthly Magazine as old as the hills to Fanny, with a review of Tremaine, which will interest her, as she will find me there, like Mahomet's coffin,

[1] Mr. Hallam was detained at Killarney by breaking his leg, and Dr. Holland had been staying with him.

between heaven and earth. My Aunt Sophy and Mag are all reading *Harry and Lucy*, and all reading it bit by bit, the only way in which it can be fairly judged. My aunt's being really interested and entertained by it, as I see she is, quite surpasses my hopes. Feelings of gratitude to Honora should have made me write this specially to her, only that I was afraid she might think that I *thought* that she *thought* of nothing but *Harry and Lucy*, which, upon the word of a reasonable creature, I do not. My aunt is entertained with Clarke's *Life*, though he says that all literary ladies are horse godmothers. In the *Evening Mail* of Monday last there are extracts from some speculations of Dr. Barry, an English physician at Paris, on the effect of atmospheric pressure in causing the motion of the blood in the veins. If you see Dr. Holland, ask him about this and its application in preventing the effect of poison.

In Bakewell's *Travels in Switzerland* there is an account apropos to ennui being the cause of suicide, of the death of Berthollet's son, who shut himself up in a room with a brasier of charcoal; a paper was found on the table with an account of his feelings during the operation of the fumes of the charcoal upon him to the last moment that he could make his writing intelligible.

To MRS. STARK.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Nov.* 27, 1825.

Our two boys were at home in August, and the happiest of the happy with two ponies and four sisters. Francis's poem of "Saul" won a medal, and Pakenham's "Jacob," a miniature Horace.

You may have seen in the papers the account of the

burning of Castle Forbes, in the county of Longford. Lord Forbes was wakened by his dog, or he would have been suffocated and burned in his bed. He showed great presence of mind: carried out, first, a quantity of gunpowder which was in a closet into which the flames were entering; and next, the family papers and pictures. A valuable collection of prints and books were lost: key not to be found in the scuffle, and servants and other ignoramuses, conceiving the *biggest* volumes must be the most valuable, wasted their energies upon folios of Irish House of Commons Journals and Statutes. The castle was in three hours' time reduced to the bare walls. I am forgetting a fact for which I began this story. A gentleman was, by the force of motive, endued with such extraordinary strength in the midst of that night's danger, that he wrenched from its iron spike and pedestal a fine marble bust of Cromwell, carried it downstairs, and threw it on the grass. Next morning he could not lift it! and no one man who tried could stir it.

To MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Dec.* 19, 1825.

I wish you to have a letter from Dr. Holland before it gets stale: therefore you must forgive me for writing on this thin paper, for no other would waft it to you free.

Your observations about the difficulties of "Taking for Granted" are excellent: I "take for granted" I shall be able to conquer them. If only one instance were taken, the whole story must turn upon that, and be constructed to bear on one point; and that *pointing* to the moral would not appear natural. As Sir Walter said to me in reply to my observing, "It is difficult to introduce the moral with-

out displeasing the reader," "The rats won't go into the trap if they smell the hand of the ratcatcher."

"Taking for Granted" was laid aside by Miss Edgeworth for ten years after this. When Mr. Ticknor was at Edgeworthstown in 1835, he says:

Miss Edgeworth was anxious to know what instances I had ever witnessed of persons suffering from "taking for granted" what proved false, and desired me quite earnestly, and many times, to write to her about it; "for," she added, "you would be surprised if you knew how much I pick up in this way." "The story," she said, "must begin lightly, and the early instances of mistake might be comic, but it must end tragically." I told her I was sorry for this. "Well," said she, "I can't help it, it must be so. The best I can do for you is, to leave it quite uncertain whether it is possible the man who is to be my victim can ever be happy again or not."

On her father's death, Miss Edgeworth had resigned the management of his estates to their new owner, her half-brother Lovell, but, in the universal difficulties which affected the money-market in 1826, she was induced to resume her post, acting in everything as her brother's agent, but taking the entire responsibility. By consummate care and prudence she weathered the storm which swamped so many in this financial crisis. The great difficulty was pay-

ing everybody when rents were not to be had; but she undertook the whole, borrowing money in small sums, paying off encumbrances, and repaying the borrowed money as the times improved; thus enabling her brother to keep the land which so many proprietors were then obliged to sell, and yet never distressing the tenants.

The second part of *Harry and Lucy* was published this year, having been written at various intervals since 1813. Like its predecessor, it had as its object to induce children to become their own instructors.

MARIA *to* MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Jan.* 27, 1826.

These last three weeks I have had multitudes of letters to write, but not one of them have I written with the least pleasure, except that sort of pleasure which we have in doing what we think a duty. Lovell has put the management of his affairs into my hands, and the receiving of his rents; and this is, except one letter which I wrote to the author of *Granby*, as soon as we had finished that delightful book, the only letter of pleasure in which I have indulged myself.

SONNA, *April* 6.

Most grateful am I, my dearest aunt, for your wonderful preservation after such a terrible fall! Often and often as I have gone down those three steep stairs have I feared that some accident would occur. Thank GOD that you are

safe! I really have but this one idea. We have had agreeable letters from Harriet E. and Sophy Fox, who are very happy at Cloona: the accounts of their little daily employments and pleasures are the most cheering thoughts I can call up at this moment. Happy in the garden looking at crocuses, contriving new beds, etc.; happy in the house, when Harriet reads out, while Sophy works, *Granby* at night and Peel's and Robinson's speeches by day.

May 27.

You have seen in the papers the death of Lady Scott. In Sir Walter's last letter he had described her sufferings from water on the chest, but we had no idea the danger was so immediate. She was a most kind-hearted, hospitable person, and had much more sense and more knowledge of character and discrimination than many of those who ridiculed her. I know I never can forget her kindness to me when I was ill at Abbotsford. Her last words at parting were, "GOD bless you! we shall never meet again." At the time it was much more likely that I should have died, I thought, than she. Sir Walter said he had been interrupted in his letter by many domestic distresses. The first two pages had been begun two months ago, and were in answer to a letter of mine inquiring about the truth of his losses, etc. Of these he spoke with cheerful fortitude, but with no bravado. He said that his losses had been great, but that he had enough left to live on; that he had had many gratifying offers of assistance, but that what he had done foolishly he would bear manfully; that he would take it all upon his own shoulders, and that he had great comfort in knowing that Lady Scott was not a person who cared about money, and that "Beatrice," as he calls Anne Scott, bore her altered prospects with cheerfulness. "She

is of a very generous disposition, and poor Janie proffered her whole fortune as if it had been a gooseberry."

After writing this much the letter appeared to have been thrown aside and forgotten to be sent, till he was roused again by a letter from me about poor Mr. Jephson. The domestic distresses which had interrupted the course of his thoughts were, the illness of his dear little grandson Lockhart, one of the finest and most engaging children I ever saw; and then Lady Scott's illness and death. He says that the letters of Malachy Malagrowther cost him but a day apiece.

July 10.

Sir Humphry Davy has been with us since Thursday, and his visit has been delightful; he has always been kind and constant in his friendship to us. I had expressed a great wish to see the "Discourses" which he annually addressed to the Royal Society, as President, on the presentation of the medals. He has been urged to publish them, but to this he has never yet consented. I had the courage—indeed, I thought at the time the rashness—to ask him to let me see the MS. of one which I was particularly anxious to see, as it related to Dr. Brinkley: Sir Humphry was so very kind to have a copy made for me of *all* his Discourses. I found them fully equal to my expectations, quite worthy of the genius and reputation of Sir Humphry Davy, and becoming the President of the Royal Society of England; giving a complete view of the discoveries and progress of science in England within the last six years, compressed into the smallest compass compatible with clearness, written with all the dignity of perfect simplicity and candour, like one sensible to national glory, but free from national jealousy; whose great object as a philosopher is the general advancement of science over the

whole world, and whose great pleasure is in conferring well-earned praise. His addresses to those to whom he presents the medals are NOBLE—always appreciating the past with generous satisfaction, yet continually exciting to future exertion. In each new discovery he opens views beyond what the discoverer had foreseen, and from each new invention shows how fresh combinations present themselves, so that in the world of science there must be room enough for the exertions of all: the best and truest moral against envy, and all those petty jealousies which have disgraced scientific as well as literary men.

Travelling, and his increased acquaintance with the world, has enlarged the *range* without lowering the *pitch* of Sir Humphry's mind—an allusion I have borrowed from an entertaining essay on training hawks sent to me by Sir John Sebright. Do you know that there is at this moment a gentleman in Ireland, near Belfast, who trains hawks and goes a-hawking—a Mr. Sinclair?

Sir Humphry repeated to us a remarkable criticism of Buonaparte's on Talma's acting: "You don't play Nero well; you gesticulate too much; you speak with too much vehemence. A despot does not need all that; he need only *pronounce. Il sait qu'il se suffit.*" "And," added Talma, who told this to Sir Humphry, "Buonaparte, as he said this, folded his arms in his well-known manner, and stood as if his attitude expressed the sentiment."

Sir Humphry thinks that, of all of royal race he has seen, legitimate or illegitimate, *noble par l'épée*, or noble by "just hereditary sway," the late Emperor of Russia was the most really noble-minded and the least ostentatious. A vast number of his munificent gifts to men of letters are known only to those by whom they were received. He has frequently sent tokens of approbation to scientific men in

various foreign countries for inventions in arts and sciences which he had found useful in his dominions. A *caisse* arrived from Russia for Sir Humphry, which he thought were some mineralogical specimens which had been promised to him; but on opening it there appeared a superb piece of plate, with a letter from the Emperor of Russia presenting it to him, as a mark of gratitude for the safety lamp. The design on the plate, the Emperor adds, was his own: it represents the genius of fire, with his bow and arrows broken.

Among other good things which Sir Humphry accomplished in his travels was the abolition of the *corda*, of ancient use in Naples,—an instrument of torture by which the criminal was hung up by a cord tied round his joined wrists, and then pulled down and let fall from a height, dislocating his wrists to a certainty, and giving a chance of breaking his arms and legs. This instrument chanced to be set up near the hotel where Sir Humphry and Lady Davy resided: they could not bear the sight, and changed their lodgings. The next time Sir Humphry was at Court the King asked why he had changed his residence. Sir Humphry explained, and expressed himself so strongly, that he awakened dormant Royal feeling, and this instrument of torture was abolished. Sir Humphry had previously represented to our Queen Caroline, then at Naples, that here was an opportunity of doing good, and of rendering herself deservedly popular. She was struck with the idea at the time, but forgot it; and then Sir Humphry took it up, and with the assistance of the public opinion of all the English, it was accomplished.

Yesterday, when I came down to breakfast, I found Sir Humphry with a countenance radiant with pleasure, and eager to tell me that Captain Parry is to be sent out upon a new Polar expedition.

August 14.

This day, my dearest aunt, our wishes have been accomplished—the sacred, awful vow has been pronounced, and Harriet and Mr. Butler drove from the church door to Cloona.[1]

Lucy bore the trials of the day wonderfully well. She was at the wedding, and much agitated when it came to the conclusion and the parting; but there was, fortunately, something to be done immediately afterwards—Sophy's[2] child to be christened; a very nice, pretty little child it is —Maxwell.

William Beaufort alarmed us by a sudden illness on Saturday: however, he was able to appear to-day and perform both ceremonies, and does not seem to have suffered by the double exertion.

To Miss Honora Edgeworth.

Black Castle, *Sept.* 3, 1826.

Thank you for wishing to be with me, but I am sure it will be better for you to be at the sea. Here, though I am obliged to think of actual business between-times, I have every motive and means for diversion for myself, both on my own account and on my aunt's. We run in and out, and laugh and talk nonsense; and every little thing amuses us together: the cat, the dog, the hog, Mr. Barry, or a *parachute* blown from the dandelion.

[1] Harriet, second daughter of the fourth Mrs. Edgeworth, married the Rev. Richard Butler, Rector of Trim, and afterwards Dean of Clonmacnoise.

[2] Mrs. Barry Fox.

Nov. 19.

Bess Fitzherbert has written an entertaining letter to Mrs. Barry, in which she mentions one of the dishes they had just had at dinner at Pozzo, between Modena and Bologna: cold boiled eels, with preserved pears, a toothpick or skewer stuck in each to take them up by, instead of a fork. My aunt's friend, Madame Boschi, near Bologna, offered to send a garden-chair drawn by bullocks for Bess, the road not being passable for *common cattle.*

To C. S. EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Dec.* 26, 1826.

I send your account, and have done my best. I have not read *Boyne Water*, but have got Lindley Murray's *Memoir*, and thank you for mentioning it. Harriet and Mr. Butler come to-morrow. Sophy Fox and Barry, and their beautiful and amiable little Maxwell, are here. How you will like that child, and make it see "upper air!" How long since those times when you used to show its mother and Harriet upper air! Do you remember how you used to do it to frighten me, and how I used to shut my eyes when you threw them up, and you used to call to me to look? Ah! *le bon temps!* But we are all very happy now, and it is delightful to hear a child's voice cooing, or even crying again in this house. Never did infant cry less than Maxwell: in short, it is the most charming little animal I ever saw. "Animal yourself, sir!"[1]

Pakenham ornamented the library yesterday with holly, and crowned plaster-of-Paris Sappho with laurels, and Mrs. Hope's picture with myrtle (*i.e.* box), and perched a great

[1] Mr. Edgeworth, admiring a baby in a nurse's arms, called it "a fine little animal." To which the nurse indignantly replied, "Animal yourself, sir!"

stuffed owl in an ivy bush on the top of a great screen which shades the sofa by the fire from the window at its back. I am excessively happy to be at home again, after my four months' absence at Black Castle.

To MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Dec.* 28, 1826.

After spending four months with you, it is most delightful to me to receive from you such assurances that I have been a pleasure and a comfort to you. I often think of William's most just and characteristic expression, that you have given him a desire to live to advanced age, by showing him how much happiness can be felt and conferred in age, where the affections and intellectual faculties are preserved in all their vivacity. In you there is a peculiar habit of allowing constantly for the *compensating* good qualities of all connected with you, and never unjustly expecting impossible perfections. This, which I have so often admired in you, I have often determined to imitate; and in this my sixtieth year, to commence in a few days, I will, I am resolved, make great progress. "Rosamond at sixty," says Margaret.

We are all a very happy party here, and I wish you could see at this moment sitting opposite to me on sofa and in arm-chair the mother and daughter and grandchild.

To MRS. BANNATYNE.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Feb.* 26, 1827.

By some strange chance I was taken away from home just after the time when Colonel Stewart's pamphlet on India, which you were so kind as to send me, arrived; in short, I never read it till a few days ago. I am in admira-

tion of it; it is beautifully written, with such clearness, lucid order, simplicity, dignity, strength, and eloquence—eloquence resulting from strong feeling. The views of its vast subject are comprehensive and masterly; the policy sound, both theoretically and practically considered; the morality as sound as the policy, indeed no policy can be sound unless joined with morality. The sensibility and philanthropy that not only breathe but live and act in this book are of the true, manly, enduring sort—not the affected, sickly, spurious kind, which is displayed only for the trick of the poet or orator. It is a book which a good and wise man must ever rejoice in having written, and which will be satisfactory to him even to the last moment of his life.

Have you seen the *Tales of the O'Hara Family*—the second series? They are of unequal value; one called the "Nowlans" is a work of great genius. Another book has much amused us, Captain Head's *Rough Sketches*, most animated and masterly sketches of his journey across the Pampas. There is much information and much good political economy condensed in his three chapters on speculators.

To MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *March* 4, 1827.

I went with Pakenham to meet my mother at Castle Pollard, and we had such a nice long talk in the carriage coming back, our tongues never intermitting one single second, I believe. I am glad you liked my graceful gentleman-like bear, and his graceful gentleman-like Italian leader.[1] We have had a succession of actors and actresses, as I may call them, personating beggars, all at the last gasp of distress; so perfect, too, was one Englishwoman that she set at defiance all the combined ingenuity of the Library in

[1] A travelling showman and bear.

cross-questioning her, and after writing a long letter for her to a Rev. Mr. Strainer, of Athlone, I was quite at a loss to decide whether she was a cheat or not, when one of the Longford police officers chanced to dine with us, I mentioned her, and out came the truth; she had imposed on him and every one at Longford, and had borrowed a child to pass for her own. We sent for our distressed lady, who was very "sick and weak with a hüge blister on her chest," and low voice and delicate motions. Oh! if you had seen her when the police officer came into the room and charged her with the borrowed child. Her countenance, voice, and motions all at once changed; her voice went up at once to *scold-pitch*, and turning round on her chair she faced the chief; but words in writing cannot do justice to the scene. I must act it for you.

We are now reading the *Voyage of the "Blonde" to the Sandwich Islands*, with the remains of the King and the Queen.[1] Pray get this book, it will delight you. Of the *Blonde*, you know the present Lord Byron is commander —the name strikes the ear continually—new fame, new associations; reverting, too, to the old Commodore Byron's sort of fame. How curious, how fleeting "this life in other's breath!"

A little box of curiosities from my most amiable American Jewess my mother presented to me this morning at the breakfast table: I was in an ecstasy, but shortlived was my joy, for I was thunderstruck the next instant by my mother's catching my arm and stopping my hand with the vehement exclamation, "Stop, stop, child, you don't know what you are doing."—"No, indeed, ma'am, I don't—what *am* I doing?" She took the *wreath* of cotton wool from

[1] King Kamehameha II., of the Sandwich Islands, and his Queen, who died of the measles in John Street, Adelphi, in 1824.

my passive hand and showed me, wrapped up in it, a humming-bird, luckily unhurt, unsquelched. The humming-bird's nest is more beautiful than the creature itself. Poor Lord Liverpool—no one can wish his existence prolonged.

> The painful family of death
> More hideous than their queen.

April 8.

I am quite well and in high good-humour and good spirits in consequence of having received the whole of Lovell's half-year's rents in full, with pleasure to the tenants, and without the least fatigue or anxiety to myself.

We are reading the second part of *Vivian Grey*, which we like better than the first. There is a scene of gamesters and swindlers wonderfully well done. I know who wrote *Almack's*. Lady de Ros tells me it is by Mrs. Purvis, sister to Lady Blessington; this accounts for both the knowledge of high, and the habits of low, life which appear in the book. "Poor dear Almack's," Lady de Ros says, is not what it was—when people were poor in London, and there were few private balls, Almack's was all in all. Her sailor son is going to publish a Journal of a Tour, including the United States and Niagara.

To C. S. EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *April* 12, 1827.

Now I have done all my agent business, I will tell you what Mr. Hope, in a letter I had from him this morning, says of *Almack's*. "It might have been a pretty thing, but I think it but a poor one. Of all slangs, that of fashion is easiest overdone. People do not *hold forth* about what is with them a matter of course. Willis, or his waiters, might

have furnished all the characteristic materials. The author ever and anon makes up for want of wit by stringing together common French milliner phrases, which have no merit but that of being exotics in England. The point consists in his *italics*. Besides, he only describes the proceedings, not the spirit of the institution of Almack's. It was rather a bold thing in London to put FEASTING out of fashion, and to make a seven-shilling ball the thing to which all aspired to be admitted, and many without the least hope of succeeding. It was the triumph of aristocracy over mere wealth. It put down the Grimes's of former days, with their nectarines and peaches at Christmas, and in so far it improved society."

All this is very true, but I do not think he does justice to the author. I particularly like the dialogue in the third volume, where Lady Anne Norbury debits and credits her hopes of happiness with her two admirers: no waiting-maid could have written that. In the second volume, also, I think there is a scene between Lord and Lady Norbury in their dressing-room, about getting rid of their guests and making room for others, which is nicely touched: the Lord and Lady are politely unfeeling; it is all kept within bounds.

Mr. Hope begs me to read *Truckleborough Hall*. Of late novels he says it is that which has amused him most. "Both sides of the political question are reviewed most impartially; both quizzed a little, and the reader left in doubt to which the author leans. The transition in the hero from rank Radicalism to a seat on the Treasury Bench, while persuading himself all the time that he remains consistent, is exceedingly well managed. Interest in the story there is none, because the subject admits not of it. Like the high-finished Dutch pictures, mere truth, well and minutely told, makes all its merit."

Then follows a sentence so complimentary to myself that I cannot copy it, and perhaps you have had enough. I trust you will give me credit, dear Harriet and Sneyd, for copying for you other people's letters, when I have nothing in my own but stupid pounds, shillings, and pence.

In a letter from my friend Mr. Ralston, from Philadelphia, he tells me that seven volumes of Sir Walter Scott's *Life of Napoleon* have been already printed there, and reviewed in the *North American Review*. Scott sends his MS. at the same time to London and to America. I tremble for this publication. Anne Scott writes to Harriet that her father is so busy writing, that she scarcely sees anything of him, though they are alone together at Abbotsford. Lockhart is much admired in London for his beauty.

To CAPTAIN BASIL HALL.[1]

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *April* 25, 1827.

I really cannot express to you how much you have gratified me by the proof of confidence you have given me. No degree of praise or admiration could flatter me so much: confidence implies something much higher—real esteem for the character. I thank you; you shall not find your confidence misplaced. I trust you will not think I have gone beyond your permission in considering my own family now with me—viz. Mrs. Edgeworth, my sisters, and my brother—as myself. The *Journal* was read aloud in our library: not a line or a word of it has been copied; and though some passages have, I know, sunk indelibly into the memories of those present, you may rest perfectly

[1] Who had lent a volume of his London *Journal* to Miss Edgeworth to read.

secure that they will never *go out* beyond ourselves. No vanity will ever tempt any one of us to boast of what we have been allowed to read; we shall strictly adhere to your terms, and never mention or allude to the book. It is delightful, most interesting, and entertaining. You may, perhaps, imagine, by conceiving yourself in my place, remote in the middle of Ireland, *how* entertaining and interesting it must be to be thus suddenly transported into the midst of the best company in London, scientific, political, and fashionable; and not merely into the midst of them, but behind the scenes with you, and after seeing and hearing and knowing your private opinion of all. Considering all this, and further, that numbers of the persons you mention in your *Journal* we were well acquainted with when we were in London, you may, perhaps, comprehend how much pleasure, of various kinds, we enjoyed while we read on.

The first page I opened upon was the character of Captain Beaufort. Do not shrink at the notion of his most intimate friend, or his sister Mrs. Edgeworth, or his nieces Fanny and Sophy, having seen this character. You need not: we all agree that it does him perfect justice.

Your manner of mentioning Lydia White was quite touching, as well as just. She was all you say of her, and her house and society were the most agreeable of the sort in London, since the time of Lady Crewe. Lydia White, besides being our kind friend, was a near connection of ours by the marriage of her nephew to a cousin of ours; and we have had means of knowing her solid good qualities, as well as those brilliant talents which charmed in society. You may guess, then, how much we were pleased by all you said of her. Of all the people who ever sold themselves to the world, I never knew one who was so well

paid as Lydia White, or any one but herself who did not, sooner or later, repent the bargain; but she had strength of mind never to expect more than the world can give, and the world in return behaved to the last remarkably well to her.

All you say of the ill-managed dinner of wits and scientific men I have often felt. There must be a mixture of nonsense with sense, or it will not amalgamate: all wits and no fools, all actors and no audience, make dinners dull things. The same men in their boots, as you say, are quite other people. "Two or three ladies, too"—we were delighted with your finding them useful as well as agreeable on such occasions.

Your account of Sidney Smith's conversation is excellent, and the manner in which you took his criticism showed how well you deserved it. He will be your friend in all the future, and I do not know any man whom I should wish more to make my friend: supereminent talents and an excellent heart, which in my opinion almost always go together. His remarks on the views you should take of America, to work out your own purpose in softening national animosities, are excellent; also all he says of American egotism and nationality. But I should be as ready to forgive vanity in a nation as in an individual, and to make it turn to good account. I have always remarked that little and envious minds are the most acute in detecting vanity in others, and the most intolerant of it. Having nothing to be proud or vain of, they cannot endure that others should enjoy a self-complacency they cannot have.

There is a sentence in one of Burke's letters, which, as far as England is concerned, might do for a motto for your intended travels: "America and we are no longer under the same crown; but if we are united by mutual

goodwill and reciprocal good offices, perhaps it may do almost as well."

Will you, my dear sir, trust me with more of your *Journals?* I think you must see, by the freedom of this letter, that you have truly pleased and obliged me: I have no other plea to offer. It is a common one in this country of mine—common, perhaps, to human nature in all places as well as Ireland—to expect that; when you have done much, you will do more; and you will, won't you? If I could get your little Eliza to say this in a coaxing voice for us, we should be sure of your compliance.

To MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *May* 10, 1827.

I get up every morning at seven o'clock, and walk out, and find that this does me a vast deal of good. After three-quarters of an hour's walk,[1] I come in to the delight of hearing Fanny read the oddest book I ever heard—a Chinese novel translated into French; a sort of Chinese *Truckleborough Hall;* politicians and courtiers, with mixture of love and flowers, and court intrigue, and challenging each other to make verses upon all occasions.

My garden is beautiful, and my mother is weeding it for me at this moment. A seedswoman of Philadelphia, to whom Mr. Ralston applied to purchase some seeds for me, as soon as she heard the name, refused to take any payment for a parcel of forty different kinds of seeds. She said she knew my father, as she came from Longford: her name was Hughes.

[1] Miss Edgeworth continued her early walks for many years. A lady who lodged in the village used to be roused by her maid in the morning with "Miss Edgeworth's walking, ma'am; it's eight o'clock."

To MISS RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Sept.* 26.

The day before yesterday we were amusing ourselves by telling who, among literary and scientific people, we should wish to come here next day. Francis said Coleridge; I said Herschel. Yesterday morning, as I was returning from my morning walk at half-past eight, I saw a bonnetless maid on the walk, with letter in hand, in search of me. When I opened the letter, I found it was from Mr. Herschel! and that he was waiting for an answer at Mr. Briggs's inn. I have seldom been so agreeably surprised; and now that he has spent twenty-four hours here, and that he is gone, I am confirmed in my opinion; and if the fairy were to ask me the question again, I should more eagerly say, "Mr. Herschel, ma'am, if you please." It was really very kind of him to travel all night in the mail, as he did, to spend a few hours here. He is not only a man of the first scientific genius, but his conversation is full of information on all subjects, and he has a taste for humour and playful nonsense, though with a melancholy exterior.

His companion, Mr. Babbage, and he, saw the Giant's Causeway on a stormy day, when the foamy waves beat high against the rocks, and added to the sublimity of the scene. Then he went from the great sublime of Nature to the sublime of Art. He arrived at the place where Colonel Colby is measuring the base line, just at the time when they had completed the repetition of the operation; and he saw, by the instrument, which had not been raised from the spot, that the accuracy of the repetition was within half a dot—the twelve-thousandth part of an inch.

Mr. Herschel has travelled on the Continent. He was particularly pleased with the character of the Tyrolese—

their national virtue founded on national piety. One morning, wakening in a cottage inn, he rose, and called in vain in kitchen and parlour: not a body was to be seen, not a creature in yard or stable. At last he heard a distant sound: listening more attentively, and following the sound, he came to a room remote from that in which he had slept, where he found all the inhabitants joining in a hymn, with beautiful voices.

You may remember having seen in the newspapers an account of a philosopher in Germany who made caterpillars manufacture for him a veil of cobweb. The caterpillars were enclosed in a glass case, and, by properly-disposed conveniences and impediments, were induced to work their web up the sides of the glass case. When completed it weighed four-fifths of a grain. Herschel saw it lying on a table, looking like the film of a bubble. When it collapsed a little, and was in that state wafted up into the air, it wreathed like fine smoke. Chantrey, who was present, after looking at it in silent admiration, exclaimed, "What a fool Bernini was to attempt transparent draperies in stone!"

Have you heard of the live camelopard, "twelve foot high, if he is an inch, ma'am?" Herschel is well acquainted with him, and was so fortunate as to see the first interview between him and a kangaroo: it stood and gazed for one instant, and the next leaped at once over the camelopard's head, and he and his great friend became hand and glove.

To MR. BANNATYNE.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Nov.* 14, 1827.

I send the letter you wished for—not to Clery, who is dead, but to Louis Bousset, who was the Abbé Edgeworth's

servant, and after his death was taken into Louis XVIII.'s household, accompanied the Royal family to Hartwell, returned with them to France, and now lives on a pension from the French Government and his wife's income; she was widow to the King's saddler. They showed much respect, my brother Sneyd says, to our pious cousin the Abbé Edgeworth's memory, and he was much edified by their manner of living together, Bousset and his wife—he a Catholic, and she a German Protestant, "perfect Christian happiness thoroughly existing between two persons of different Churches, but of the same faith."

Though I admire the instance and exception to general rules, I should not wish a similar experiment to be often repeated, being very much of Dr. Johnson's opinion, that there are so many causes naturally of disagreement between people yoked together, that there is no occasion to add another unnecessarily.

To MR. BANNATYNE.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Dec.* 4, 1827.

I am very glad to hear that the author of *Cyril Thornton* is Mrs. Bannatyne's *nephew*. I have just finished reading it, and had made up my opinion of it, and so had all my family, before we knew that the author was any way connected with you. I am not weary of repeating that I think, and that we all think it the most interesting novel we have read for years; indeed, we could not believe it to be fiction. We read it with all the intense interest which the complete belief in reality commands. Officers of our acquaintance all speak to the reality and truth of the scenes described. Military men and gentlemen are delighted with *Cyril Thornton*, because he is a gentleman,

ay, every inch a gentleman; and with the cut in his face, and all the hashing and mashing he met with in the wars, we are firmly and unanimously of opinion that he must be very engaging. We hope that the author is like his hero in all saving these scars and the loss of his arm; but were the likeness exact even in these, he would be sure of interesting at Edgeworthstown; and we hope that, if ever he comes to Ireland, you and Mrs. Bannatyne will do us the favour to persuade him to come to see us, and to bring his charming wife. We hear she is charming; and, from the good taste and good feeling of his writings, we can readily take it for granted that his choice must be charming, in the best sense of that hackneyed, but still comprehensive word. There is a peculiar delicacy in this book, which delights from being accompanied, as it is, with the strongest evidence of deep sensibility.

Mrs. Mary Sneyd, sister of the second and third Mrs. Edgeworths, who had partially lived with her brother in Staffordshire after the death of her sister Charlotte, returned in 1828 to spend the rest of her life at Edgeworthstown. Here the beautiful and venerable old lady was a central figure in the family home, where all the family vied in loving attentions to her. Mrs. Farrar[1] describes her there:—

"It was a great pleasure to me to see the sister of two of Mr. Edgeworth's wives,—one belonging to the same period, and dressed in

[1] Author of *The Children's Robinson Crusoe*, etc.

the same style as the lovely Honora. She did not appear till lunch-time, when we found her seated at the table in a wheel-chair, on account of her lameness. She reminded me of the pictures of the court beauties of Louis XIV. Her dress was very elaborate. Her white hair had the effect of powder, and the structure on it defies description. A very white throat was set off to advantage by a narrow black velvet ribbon, fastened by a jewel. The finest lace ruffles about her neck and elbows, with a long-waisted silk dress of rich texture and colour, produced an effect that was quite bewitching. She was wonderfully well preserved for a lady over eighty years of age, and it was pleasant to see the great attention paid her by all the family. She was rather deaf, so I was seated by her side and requested to address my conversation to her. When lunch was over she was wheeled into the library, and occupied herself in making a cotton net to put over the wall-fruit to keep it from the birds. It was worth a journey to Edgeworthstown to see this beautiful specimen of old age."

MARIA EDGEWORTH *to* MRS. EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *May* 13, 1828.

We had a serious alarm this morning, and serious danger, but it is perfectly over now, and no damage done but what a few days' work of plasterer and carpenter can repair. At seven o'clock this morning a roaring was heard in the servants' hall, and Mulvanny,[1] who had put on the blower, found the chimney on fire, and Anne[2] saw dreadful smoke breaking out in the passage going from the anteroom of my aunt's dressing-room. Barney Woods,[3] perceiving that it was no common affair of a chimney on fire, had the sense to ring the workman's bell. I was dressed, heard it, and Anne met me coming from my room to inquire what was the matter, and told me—indeed her face told me! Lovell was up and ready—most active and judicious. Thirty men were assembled; water in abundance. Frank Langan indefatigable and most courageous. The long ladder was put up against the house near the pump; up the men went, and bucket after bucket poured down, Mulvanny standing on the top of the chimney. Meantime the great press, next the maid's room, was torn down by men working for life and death, for the smoke was bursting through, and the whole wall horribly hot. The water poured into the chimney would not, for half an hour, go down to the bottom; something stopped it. A terrible smell of burning wood. The water ran through all manner of flues and places and flooded the whole ceiling of the hall. Holes were made to let it through, or the whole ceiling would have come down *en masse;* the water poured through in floods on the floor; Margaret[4] and boys sweep-

[1] Mulvanny, the knife boy.
[2] Anne, ladies'-maid.
[3] The steward.
[4] The housemaid.

ing it out of the hall door continually. While the men were at work under Lovell's excellent orders, Honora and I were having all papers and valuables carried out, for we knew that if the flames reached the garrets nothing could save the house. All the title-deed boxes, and lease presses, and all Lovell's, and all your papers, and my grandfather's books, and my father's picture, were safe on the grass in less than one hour. It took three hours before the fire was extinguished, or, I should say, got under. The pump was pumped dry, but Lovell had sent long before a cart with barrels for water to the river—tons of water were used, pouring, pouring incessantly, and this alone could have saved us.

By eleven o'clock all the boxes and papers, and pictures, were in their places, and we sent for the chimney-sweepers, not the old ones, who, as we rightly guessed, were the cause of the mischief. The chimney has been broken open, and a boy has been working incessantly tearing down an incrustation of soot—immense pieces of black *tufo*,—in fact, the chimney became a volcano—fire, water, and steam all operating together. The fire was found still burning inside at five this evening, but is all out now, the boy has been up at the top.

The zeal, the sense, the generosity, the courage of the people, is beyond anything I can describe, I can only feel it. But what astonished me was their steadiness and silence, no advising or pushing in each other's way—all working and obeying. Lovell had lines of boys from the ladder to the cow's pool handing the buckets passed up by the men on the ladder to the frightful top. Thank GOD not a creature was hurt.

Honora Edgeworth adds:

I need add nothing to what Maria has said about others, but I must say about herself, that nobody who has seen her in small alarms, such as the turning of a carriage, or such things, could believe the composure, presence of mind, and courage she showed in our great alarm to-day. I hope she has not suffered; as yet she does not appear the worse for her exertions.

MARIA EDGEWORTH *to* MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Nov.* 16, 1828.

Thank you, thank you for the roses; the yellow Scotch and Knight's dark red, and the ever-blowing, came quite fresh, and just at the moment I wanted them, when I had taken to my garden, after finishing my gutters. Lady Hartland told me that the common people call the *rose des quatre saisons*, the quarter session rose.

Have you read the *Recollections of Hyacinth O'Gara?* It is a little sixpenny book; I venture to say you would like it; I wish I was reading it to you. I am much pleased with Napier's *History of the Peninsular War*. The Spanish character and all that influenced it, accidentally and permanently, is admirably drawn. There is the evidence of truth in the work. Heber is charming, but I haven't read him! People often say "charming" of books they have not read; but I have read extracts in two reviews, and have the pleasure of the book on the table before me.

I have not a scrap of news for you, except that an ass and a calf walked over my flower-beds, and that I did not kill either of them. If the ass had not provoked me to this degree, I was in imminent danger of growing too fond of him, as I never could meet him drawing loads without stopping to pat him, till clouds of dust rose from his thick

hide. But now, I will take no more notice of him—for a week!

To MISS RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Jan.* 1, 1829.

Fanny Edgeworth is now Fanny Wilson;[1] I can hardly believe it! She is gone! I feel it, and long must feel it, with anguish, selfish anguish. But she will be happy—of that I have the most firm, delightful conviction; and therefore all that I cannot help now feeling is, I know, only *surface* feeling, and will soon pass away. The more I have seen and known of Lestock, the more I like him and love him, and am convinced I shall always love him, whose every word and look bears the stamp and value of sincerity.

Both their voices pronounced the words of the marriage vow with perfect clearness and decision. Mr. Butler performed the ceremony with great feeling and simplicity. I will tell my dearest aunt and you all the little circumstances; at present they are all in confusion, great and small, near and distant, and I am sick at heart in the midst of it all with the shameful, weak, selfish, uppermost sorrow of parting with this darling child.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

BLOOMFIELD, *Jan.* 19, 1829.

An immense concourse of people,—cavalcade and carriages innumerable, passed by here to-day. We saw it, and you will see it all in the newspapers. Banners with *Constitutional Agitation* printed in black, *M*obility and

[1] Frances Maria, eldest daughter of the fourth Mrs. Edgeworth, married Lestock P. Wilson, Esq., of London.

Nobility in black, crape hatbands, etc. Lord Anglesea's two little sons riding between two officers, in the midst of the hurricane mob, struck me most. One of the boys, a little midge, seemed to stick on the horse by accident, or by mere dint of fearlessness: the officer put his arm round him once, and set him up, the boy's head looking another way, and the horse keeping on his way, through such noise, and struggling, and waves multitudinous of mob.

There is an entertaining article in the *Quarterly Review* on *The Subaltern.* I do not like that on Madame de Genlis—coarse, and over-doing the object by prejudice and virulence. The review of Scott's Prefaces is ungrounded and confused—how different from his own writing! But there is an article worth all the rest put together, on Scientific Institutions, written in such a mild, really philosophical spirit, such a pure, GREAT MAN'S desire to do good; I cannot but wish and hope it might prove to be Captain Beaufort's. If you have not read it, never rest till you do.

To CAPTAIN BASIL HALL.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *March* 12, 1829.

. . . If I could, as you say, flatter myself that Sir Walter Scott was in any degree influenced to write and publish his novels from seeing my sketches of Irish character, I should indeed triumph in the "thought of having been the proximate cause of such happiness to millions."

In what admirable taste Sir Walter Scott's introduction[1] is written! No man ever contrived to speak so delightfully of himself, so as to gratify public curiosity, and yet to avoid all appearance of egotism,—to let the public into his mind, into all that is most interesting and most useful to posterity

[1] To the new edition of *Waverley.*

to know of his history, and yet to avoid all improper, all impertinent, all superfluous disclosures.

Children's questions are often simply *sublime:* the question your three-years-old asked was of these—"Who sanded the seashore?"

To MISS RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *May* 29, 1829.

I cannot forbear writing specially to you, as I know you will feel so much about Captain Beaufort's appointment to the Hydrographership; I wish poor William had been permitted the pleasure of hearing of it.[1] It would have given him pleasure even on his dying bed, noble, generous creature as he was; he would have rejoiced for his friend, and have felt that merit is sometimes rewarded in this world. This appointment is, in every respect, all that Captain Beaufort wished for himself, and all that his friends can desire for him. As one of the first people in the Admiralty said, "Beaufort is the only man in England fit for the place."

Very touching letters have come to us from people whom we scarcely knew, whom William had attached so much; and many whom he had employed speak of him as the kindest of masters, and as a benefactor whose memory will be ever revered.

To MRS. RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Sept.* 27, 1829.

I am now able, with the consent of all my dear guardians, to write with my own hand to assure you that I am quite well.

[1] William Edgeworth had died of consumption on 7th May after a two months' illness.

I enjoyed the snatches I was able to have of Wordsworth's conversation, and I think I had quite as much as was good for me. He has a good philosophical bust, a long, thin, gaunt face, much wrinkled and weatherbeaten: of the Curwen style of figure and face, but with a more cheerful and benevolent expression.

While confined to my sofa and forbidden my pen, I have been reading a good deal: 1st, *Cinq Mars*, a French novel, with which I think you would be charmed, because I am; 2nd, *The Collegians*, in which there is much genius and strong drawing of human nature, but not elegant: terrible pictures of the passions, and horrible, breathless interest, especially in the third volume, which never flags till the last huddled twenty pages. My guardians turn their eyes reproachfully upon me. Mr. William Hamilton has been with us since the day before Wordsworth came, and we continue to like him.

May 3, 1830.

It is very happy for your little niece that you have so much the habit of expressing to her your kind feelings; I really think that if my thoughts and feelings were shut up completely within me, I should burst in a week, like a steam-engine without a snifting-clack, now called by the grander name of a safety-valve.

You want to know what I am doing and thinking of: of ditches, drains, and sewers; of dragging quicks from one hedge and sticking them down into another, at the imminent peril of their green lives; of two houses to let, one tenant promised from the Isle of Man, and another from the Irish Survey; of two bull-finches, each in his cage on the table—one who would sing if he could, and the other who could sing, I am told, if he would. Then I am

thinking for three hours a day of *Helen*, to what purpose I dare not say. At night we read Dr. Madden's *Travels to Constantinople* and elsewhere, in which there are most curious facts: admirable letter about the plague; a new mode of treatment, curing seventy-five in a hundred; and a family living in a mummy vault, and selling mummies. You must read it.

My peony tree is the most beautiful thing on earth. Poor dear Lord Oriel gave it me. His own is dead, and he is dead; but love for him lives in me still.

Sir Stamford Raffles is one of the finest characters I ever read of, and *did* more than is almost credible. I have been amused with *The Armenians*,[1]—amused with its pictures of Greek, Armenian, and Turkish life, and interested in its very romantic story.

July 19.

If there should not be any insuperable objection to it on your part, I will do myself the pleasure of being in your arms the first week in August, that I may be some time with you before I take my departure for England for the winter.

The people about us are now in great distress, having neither work nor food; and we are going to buy meal to distribute at half-price. Meal was twenty-three shillings a hundred, and potatoes sevenpence a stone, last market-day at Granard. Three weeks longer must the people be supported till new food comes from the earth.

This is the last letter Maria Edgeworth addressed to her aunt. She paid her intended visit to her in August, but had left her before

[1] A novel by Macfarlane.

her last illness began. Mrs. Ruxton died on the 1st of November, while Maria was in London with her sister Fanny—Mrs. Lestock Wilson. The loss of her aunt was the greatest Miss Edgeworth had sustained since the death of her father. She had ever been the object of exceeding love, one with whom every thought and feeling was shared, one of her greatest sources of happiness.

MARIA *to* MISS RUXTON.

69 WELBECK STREET, LONDON,
Dec. 8, 1830.

All my friends have been kind in writing to me accounts of you, my dear Sophy. You and Margaret are quite right to spend the winter at Black Castle; and the pain you must endure in breaking through all the old associations and deep remembrances will, I trust, be repaid, both in the sense of doing right and in the affection of numbers attached to you.

I spent a fortnight with Sneyd very happily, in spite of mobs and incendiaries. Brandfold is a very pretty place, and to me a very pleasant house. The library, the principal room, has a trellis along the whole front, with 'spagnolette windows opening into it, and a pretty conservatory at the end, with another glass door opening into it. The views seen between the arches of the trellis beautiful; flower-knots in the grass, with stocks, hydrangeas, and crimson and pale China roses in profuse blow. Sneyd enjoys everything about him so much, it is quite delightful to see

him in his home. You have heard from Honora of the sense and steadiness with which he resisted the mob at Goudhurst.

I spent a morning and an evening very pleasantly at Lansdowne House. They had begged me to come and drink tea with them in private, and to come early: I went at nine: I had been expected at eight. All Lady Lansdowne's own family, and as she politely said, "All my old friends at Bowood" now living: Miss Fox, Lord John Russell, Lord Auckland, the young Romillys, Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy, Mr. Wishaw, Mr. Turner,—whom I must do myself the justice to say I recollected immediately, who showed us the Bank seventeen years ago,—and Conversation Sharpe.

They say that Charles X. is quite at his ease, amusing himself, and not troubling himself about the fate of Polignac, or any of his ministers: there is great danger for them, but still I hope the French will not disgrace this revolution by spilling their blood. Lord Lansdowne mentioned an instance of the present King Louis Philippe's *présence d'esprit:* a mob in Paris surrounded him — "Que desirez-vous, messieurs?" "Nous desirons Napoléon." "Eh bien, allez donc le trouver." The mob laughed, cheered, and dispersed.

I have seen dear good Joanna Baillie several times, and the Carrs. It has been a great pleasure to me to feel myself so kindly received by those I liked best in London years ago. It is always gratifying to find old friends the same after long absence, but it has been particularly so to me now, when not only the leaves of the pleasures of life fall naturally in its winter, but when the great branches on whom happiness depended are gone.

Dr. Holland's children are very fine, happy-looking children, and he does seem so to enjoy them. His little boy, in reply to the commonplace, aggravating question of

"Who loves you? Nobody in this world loves you!" "Yes, there is somebody: papa loves me, I know—I am sure!" and throwing himself on his back on his Aunt Mary's lap, he looked up at his father with such a sweet, confident smile. The father was standing between Sir Edward Alderson and Southey, the one sure he had him by the ear, and the other by the imagination; but the child had him by the heart. He smiled and nodded at his boy, and with an emphasis in which the whole soul spoke low, but strong, said, "Yes, I *do* love you." Neither the lawyer nor the poet heard him.

All my friends understand that I keep out of all fine company and great parties, and see only my friends.

Here the carriage came to the door, and we have been to see Mrs. Calcott, who was Mrs. Graham, who was very glad to see me, and entertaining; and Lady Elizabeth Whitbread as kind and affectionate as ever. She is struggling between her natural pride on her brother's ministerial appointment, and her natural affection which fears for his health.

Joanna Baillie tells me that Lord Dudley wrote to Sir Walter, offering to take upon himself the whole debt, and be paid by instalments. Sir Walter wrote a charming note of refusal.

Thursday.

I saw Talleyrand at Lansdowne House—like a corpse, with his hair dressed "*ailes de pigeon*" *bien poudré*. As Lord Lansdowne drolly said, "How much those *ailes de pigeon* have gone through unchanged! How many revolutions have they seen! how many changes of their master's mind!" Talleyrand has less countenance than any man of talents I ever saw. He seems to think not only that *la parole était donné à l'homme pour déguiser sa pensée*, but

that expression of countenance was given to him as a curse, to betray his emotions: therefore he has exerted all his abilities to conquer all expression, and to throw into his face that "no meaning" which puzzles more than wit; but I heard none. His niece, the Duchesse de Dino, was there: little, and ugly—plain, I should say—nobody is ugly now but myself.

To MISS HONORA EDGEWORTH.

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET,
Jan. 8, 1831.

Now I will tell you of my delightful young Christmas party at Mrs. Lockhart's. After dinner she arranged a round table in the corner of the room, on which stood a magnificent iced plum cake. There were to be twelve children: impossible to have room for chairs all round the table: it was settled that the king and queen alone should be invited to the honours of the sitting; but Mr. Lockhart, in a low voice, said, "Johnny! there must, my dear Sophia, you know, be a chair for Johnny here—all's right now."

Enter first, Miss Binning, a young lady of fifteen, Johnny's particular friend, who had been invited to make crowns for the king and queen—a very nice elegant-looking girl with a slight figure.

Then came from the top of the stairs peals of merry laughter, and in came the revel rout; the king and queen with their gilt paper admirable crowns on their heads, and little coronation robes; the queen was Mrs. Lockhart's youngest child, like a dear little fairy; and the king to match. All the others in various ways pleasing and prettily simply dressed in muslins of a variety of colours; plenty

of ringlets of glossy hair, fair or brown, none black, with laughing blue eyes. And now they look at the tickets they have drawn for their twelfth-night characters, and read them out. After eating as much as well could be compassed, the revel rout ran upstairs again to the drawing-room, where open space and verge enough had been made for hunt the slipper; and down they all popped in the circle, of which you may see the likeness in the *Pleasures of Memory*. Then came dancing; and as the little and large dancers were all Scotch, I need not say how good it was. Mrs. Lockhart is really a delightful creature, the more lovable the closer one comes to her and in *London*. How very, very kind of her to invite me to this quite family party; if she had invented for ever, she could not have found what would please me more.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

LONDON, *January* 20.

I write this "certificate of existence," and moreover, an affidavit of my being a-foot[1] again, and can go downstairs with one foot foremost like a child, and wore a black satin shoe like another last night at Mrs. Elliot's.

Now sign, seal, and deliver for the bare life—of Mrs. Hope and the Duchess of Wellington in my next.

January 22.

I left off at the Duchess of Wellington. I heard she was ill and determined to write and ask if she wished to see me; a hundred of the little London *remoras* delayed and stopped me and fortunately — I almost always find

[1] Miss Edgeworth had twisted her foot a few nights before in getting out of the carriage, and was unable to use it for some days.

cause to rejoice instead of deploring when I have delayed to execute an intention, so that I must conclude that my fault is precipitation not procrastination. The very day I had my pen in my hand to write to her and was called away to write some other letter, much to my annoyance; much to my delight a few hours afterwards came a little pencil note, begging me to come to Apsley House if I wished to please an early friend who could never forget the kindness she had received at Edgeworthstown. I had not been able to put my foot to the ground, but I found it easy with motive to trample on impossibilities, and there is no going upstairs at Apsley House, for the Duke has had apartments on the ground floor, a whole suite, appropriated to the Duchess now that she is so ill, and I had only to go leaning on Fanny's arm, through a long passage to a magnificent room — not magnificent from its size, height, length, or breadth, but from its contents: the presents of Cities, Kingdoms, and Sovereigns. In the midst, on a high, narrow, mattressed sofa like Lucy's, all white and paler than ever Lucy was, paler than marble, lay as if laid out a corpse, the Duchess of Wellington. Always little and delicate-looking, she now looked a miniature figure of herself in wax-work. As I entered I heard her voice before I saw her, before I could distinguish her features among the borders of her cap; only saw the place where her head lay on the huge raised pillow; the head moved, the head only, and the sweet voice of Kitty Pakenham exclaimed, "O! Miss Edgeworth, you are the truest of the true — the kindest of the kind." And a little, delicate, death-like white hand stretched itself out to me before I could reach the couch, and when I got there I could not speak—not a syllable, but she, with most perfect composure, more than composure, cheerfulness of tone,

went on speaking; as she spoke, all the Kitty Pakenham expression appeared in that little shrunk face, and the very faint colour rose, and the smile of former times. She raised herself more and more, and spoke with more and more animation in charming language and with all her peculiar grace and elegance of kindness recollected so much of past times and of my father particularly, whose affection she convinced me had touched her deeply.

Opposite her couch hung the gold shield in imitation of the shield of Achilles with all the Duke's victories embossed on the margin, the Duke and his staff in the centre, surrounded with blazing rays, given by the city of London. On either side the great candelabras belonging to the massive plateau given by Portugal, which cannot be lifted without machinery. At either end, in deep and tall glass cases, from top to bottom ranged the services of Dresden and German china, presented by the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia. While I looked at these, the Duchess raising herself quite up, exclaimed with weak-voiced, strong-souled enthusiasm, "All tributes to merit! there's the value, all pure, no corruption ever suspected even. Even of the Duke of Marlborough that could not be said so truly."

The fresh, untired enthusiasm she feels for his character, for her own still youthful imagination of her hero, after all she has gone through, is most touching. There she is, fading away, still feeding when she can feed on nothing else, on his glories, on the perfume of his incense. She had heard of my being in London from Lord Downes, who had seen me at the Countess de Salis's, where we met him and Lady Downes; when I met her again two days after we had been at Apsley House she said the Duchess was not so ill as I supposed, that her physicians do not

allow that they despair. But notwithstanding what friends and physicians say, my own impression is, that she cannot be much longer for this world.

To MISS HONORA EDGEWORTH.

NORTH AUDLEY STREET,
Feb. 10, 1831.

I am just come home from breakfasting with Sir James Macintosh. Fanny was with me, double, double pleasure, but we both feel as we suppose dramdrinkers do after their "mornings." My hand and my mind are both unsteadied and unfitted for business after this intoxicating draught. O what it is to "come within the radiance of genius,"[1] not only every object appears so radiant, but I feel myself so much increased in powers, in range of mind, a *vue d'oiseau* of all things raised above the dun dim fog of commonplace life. How can any one like to live with their inferiors and prefer it to the delight of being raised up by a superior to the bright regions of genius? The inward sense of having even this perception of excellence is a pleasure far beyond what flattery *can* give. Flattery is like a bad perfume, nauseous and overpowering after the first waft, and hurtful as well as nauseous. But as luncheon is coming and we must go directly to the Admiralty to see Captain Beaufort, and then to the Carrs' —no more rhodomontading to-day.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

NORTH AUDLEY STREET, *Feb.* 11, 1831.

You must have seen in the papers the death of Mr. Hope, and I am sure it shocked you. But it was scarcely

[1] Quoted from a letter of her sister Anna after the death of Dr. Beddoes.

possible that it could strike you so much as it did me. I, who had seen him but a few days before, and who had been rallying him upon his being hypochondriac. I, who had been laughing at him along with Mrs. Hope, for being, I thought, merely in the cold fit after having been in the hot fit of enthusiasm while finishing his book. He knew too well, poor man, what we did not know. I believe that I never had time to describe to you the impression that visit to him made upon me. I had actually forced Mrs. Hope to go up and say he must see me; that such an old friend, and one who had such a regard for him, and for whom I knew he had a sincere regard, must be admitted to see him even in his bed-chamber. He sent me word that if I could bear to see a poor sick man in his night-cap, I might come up.

So I did, and followed Mrs. Hope through all the magnificent apartments, and then up to the attics, and through and through room after room till we came to his retreat, and then a feeble voice from an arm-chair—

"O! my dear Miss Edgeworth, my kind friend to the last."

And I saw a figure sunk in his chair like La Harpe, in figured silk *robe de chambre* and night-cap; death in his paled, sunk, shrunk face; a gleam of affectionate pleasure lighted it up for an instant, and straight it sunk again. He asked most kindly for my two sisters—"tell them I am glad they are happy."

The half-finished picture of his second son was in the corner, beside his arm-chair, as if to cheer his eyes.

"By an Irish artist," he politely said to me, "of great talent."

When I rallied him at parting on his low spirits, and said, "How much younger you are than I am!"

"No, no; not in mind, not in the powers of life. GOD bless you; good-bye."

I told him I would only say *au revoir*, and that never came; it was only the next day but one after this that Fanny read to me his death in the paper. It was dreadfully sudden to us; what must it have been to Mrs. Hope? I am sure she had no idea of its coming so soon. I forgot to say that as I got up to go away, I told him laughing, that he was only ill of a plethora of happiness, that he had everything this world could give, and only wanted a little adversity.

"Yes," said he, "I am happy, blessed with such a wife and such a son!"

He looked with most touching gratitude up to her, and she drew back without speaking.

Oh! I cannot tell you the impression the whole scene left on my mind.

March 14.

I hope your mother is better, and now inhaling spring life. Tell her, with my love, that I have exhibited her work[1] at various places to the admiration and almost incredulity of all beholders—such beautiful flowers at ninety-two!

At last we were fortunately at home when Lady Wellesley and Miss Caton called, and, thanks to my impudence in having written to him the moment he landed, and thanks to his good nature, Sir John Malcolm came at the same moment, and Lady Wellesley and he talked most agreeably over former times in India and later times in Ireland. Lady Wellesley is not nearly so tall or magnificent a person as I expected. Her face beautiful,

[1] A scarf embroidered with flowers, worked for Miss Edgeworth by Mrs. Beaufort, when she was ninety-two.

her manner rather too diplomatically studied. People say "she has a remarkably good manner;" perfectly good manners are never "remarkable," felt, not seen. Sir John is as entertaining and delightful as his Persian sketches, and as instructive as his *Central India*.

To HER SISTER HARRIET—MRS. R. BUTLER.

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET,
March 16, 1831.

The days are hardly long enough to read all men's speeches in Parliament. I get the result into me from Fanny, and read only the notables. Mr. North's speech was, as you say, the best and plainest he ever made, and was so esteemed. Macaulay's reads better than it was spoken, quite marred in the delivery, and he does not look the orator; but no matter, in spite of his outside, his inside will get him on: he has far more power in him than Mr. North.

Get the eleventh volume of the new edition of Sir Walter's poems, containing a new Introduction and Essay on Ballads and ballad writing, all entertaining, and a model for egotists which very few will be able to follow, though many will strive and be laughed at for their pains.

March 29.

Old as I am and imaginative as I am thought to be, I have really always found that the pleasures I have expected would be great have actually been greater in the enjoyment than in the anticipation. This is written in my sixty-fourth year. The pleasure of being with Fanny[1] has been

[1] Mrs. Lestock Wilson.

far, far greater than I had expected. The pleasures here altogether, including the kindness of old friends and the civilities of acquaintances, are still more enhanced than I had calculated upon by the home and the quiet library, and easy-chair morning retreat I enjoy. Our long-expected visit to Herschel above all has far surpassed my expectations, raised as they were and warm from the fresh enthusiasm kindled by his last work.

Mrs. Herschel, who by the bye is very pretty, which does no harm, is such a delightful person, with so much simplicity and so much sense, so fit to sympathise with him in all things intellectual and moral, and making all her guests comfortable and happy without any apparent effort; she was extremely kind to Fanny, and Mr. Herschel to Lestock.

Thursday I went down to Slough alone in Fanny's carriage, as Lestock was not well, and she would not leave him. There was no company, and the evening was delightfully spent in hearing and talking. I had made various pencil notes in my copy of his book to ask for explanations, and so patient and kind and clear they were.

On Saturday I began to grow very anxious about six o'clock, and Mrs. Herschel good-naturedly sympathised with me, and we stood at the window that looks out on a distant turn of the London road, and at last I saw a carriage glass flash and then an outline of a well-known coachman's form, and then the green chaise, and all right.

There were at dinner the Provost of Eton in his wig, a large fine presence of a Provost—Dr. Goodall; Mrs. Hervey, very pretty, and gave me a gardenia like a Cape jessamine, white, sweet smelling—much talking of it and smelling and handing it about; Mrs. Gwatkin, one of Sir Joshua Reynold's nieces, has been very pretty, and though deaf is very agreeable—enthusiastically and affectionately

fond of her uncle—indignant at the idea of his not having himself written the *Discourses;* "Burke or Johnson indeed! no such thing—he wrote them himself. I am evidence, he used to employ me as his secretary: often I have been in the room when he has been composing, walking up and down the room, stopping sometimes to write a sentence," etc.

On Sunday to Windsor Chapel; saw the King and the Queen, and little Prince George of Cambridge, seen each through the separate compartments of their bay window up aloft. The service lasted three hours, and then we went, by particular desire, to Eton College, to see the Provost and Mrs. Goodall, and the pictures of all the celebrated men. Some of these portraits taken when very young are interesting; some from being like, some from being quite unlike what one would expect from their after characters. We saw the books of themes and poems that had been judged worth preserving. Canning's and Lord Wellesley's much esteemed. Drawers full of prints; many rare books; the original unique copy of *Reynard the Fox* —the table of contents of which is so exceedingly diverting I would fain have copied it on the spot, but the Provost told me a copy could be had at every stall for one penny.

Got home to Herschel's while the sun yet shone, and I having the day before begged the favour of him to repeat for Fanny and Lestock the experiments and explanations on polarised light and periodical colours, he had everything ready, and very kindly went over it all again, and afterwards said to Mrs. Herschel, "It is delightful to explain these things to Mrs. Wilson; she can understand anything with the least possible explanation."

It was a fine moonlight night, and he took us out to see Saturn and his rings, and the Moon and her volcanoes

Saturn, I thought, looked very much as he used to do; but the Moon did surprise and charm me—very different from anything I had seen or imagined of the moon. A large portion of a seemingly immense globe of something like rough ice, resplendent with light and all over protuberances like those on the outside of an oyster shell, supposing it immensely magnified in a Brobdingnag microscope, a lustrous-mica look all over the protuberances, and a distinctly marked mountain-in-a-map in the middle shaded delicately off.

I must remark to you that all the time we were seeing we were eighteen feet aloft, on a little stage about eight feet by three, with a slight iron rod rail on three sides, but quite open to fall in front, and Lestock repeatedly warned me not to forget and step forwards.

Monday, our visit, alas! was to come to an end. Mr. Herschel offered to take Lestock to town in his gig, which he accepted with pleasure, and Fanny and I went with Mrs. Herschel to see Sir Joshua's pictures at Mrs. Gwatkin's. There is one of Charles Fox done when he was eighteen: the face so faded that it looks like an unfinished sketch, not the least like any other picture I have ever seen of the jolly, moon-faced Charles Fox, but some resemblance to the boy of thirteen in the print I begged from Lord Buchan. The original "Girl with a muff" is here; the original also of "Simplicity," who has now flowers in her lap in consequence of the observation of a foolish woman who, looking at the picture as it was originally painted, with the child's hands interlaced, with the backs of the hands turned up, "How beautiful! How natural the dish of prawns the dear little thing has in her lap!"

Sir Joshua threw the flowers over the prawns.

There appeared in this collection many sad results of Sir Joshua's experiments on colours; a very fine copy of his from Rembrandt's picture of himself, all but the face so black as to be unintelligible. There was the first Sir Joshua ever drew of himself—and his last; this invaluable last is going—black cracks and masses of bladdery paint. He painted Mrs. Gwatkin seven times. "But don't be vain, my dear, I only use your head as I would that of any beggar—as a good practice."

Her husband is a true Roast Beef of Old England King and Constitution man, who most good-naturedly hunted out from his archives a letter of Hannah More's, which happened to be particularly interesting to me, on Garrick in the character of Hamlet; it was good, giving a decided view of what Garrick at least thought the unity of the character.

From metaphysics to physics, we finished with a noble slice of the roast beef of Old England, "fed, ma'am," said Mr. Gwatkin, "by his present Majesty, GOD bless him."

Arrived at No. 1 in good time, and dined yesterday at Lady Davy's. Rogers, Gally Knight, Lord Mahon, and Lord Ashburner, who was very agreeable. He has been eleven years roaming the world, and is not foreign-fangled. Mrs. Marcet, who came in the evening, was the happiness of it to me.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET,
April 1831.

Such a day as yesterday! sun shining—neither too hot nor too cold. This was just the time of year, I think, that you saw Knowle, and I never did see a place and house which pleased me more; exceedingly entertained with the

portraits, endless to particularise. Several of Grammont's beauties, not so good in colours as in black and white. Sir Walter's black and white portrait of James I. made the full length of his unkingly Majesty a hundred times more interesting to me than it could otherwise have been,—mean, odd, strange-looking mortal. And then the silver room, as it is called, how it was gilt to me by the genius of romance, all Heriot's masterpieces there, would have been but cups and boxes ranged on toilette table and India cabinet but for the master magician touch. But we had to leave Knowle as we had engaged the day before at Brandfold to go to Mr. Jones (on the Distribution of Wealth) at Brasted. Such crowds of ideas as he poured forth, uttering so rapidly as to keep one quite on the stretch not to miss any of the good things. Half of them, I am sure, I have forgotten, but note for futurity; specially a fair-haired heiress now living, shut up in an old place called the Moate, old as King John's time. Mr. Jones had invited Dr. and Mrs. Felton, and had a luncheon *comme il y en a peu* and wines of every degree: hock from Bremen, brought over by our mutual friend Mr. Jacob, and far too valuable for an ignoramus like me to swallow.

Chevening? You are afraid we shall not have time to see Chantrey's monument. "O! but you must see it," said Mr. Jones, and so he and Dr. Felton ordered gig and pony carriage to let our horses rest, and follow and meet us, and away we went. Mr. Jones driving me in his gig to a beautiful parky place where Dr. Felton flourishes for the summer, and saw his children, who had wished to see the mother of Frank and Rosamond. Then through Mr. Manning's beautiful place—never travelling a high road or a by-road all the way to Chevening churchyard. The white marble monument of Lady Frederica

Stanhope is in the church; plain though she was in life, she is beautiful in death, something of exquisite tenderness in the expression of her countenance, maternal tenderness, and repose, matronly repose, and yet the freshness of youth in the rounded arm and delicate hand that lightly, affectionately presses the infant—she dies, if dying it can be called, so placid, so happy; the head half-turned sinks into the pillow, which, without touching, one can hardly believe to be marble. I am sure Harriet recollects Lady Frederica at Paris, just before she was married.

We left Chevening, and can never forget it, and drove through the wealds and the charts, called, as Mr. Jones tells me, from the charters, and see a chapel built by Porteus to civilise some of the wicked ones of the wealds or wilds, and Ireton's house,[1] where some say Cromwell lived, now belonging to Perkins the brewer. Then "see to the right that rich green field, where King Henry VIII. used to stop and wind his horn, that people might gather and drag himself and suite through the slough," and it was near eight before we got to town, and Lestock waiting dinner with the patience of Job. He, Lestock, not Job, is a delightful person to live with, never annoyed about hours or trifles of that kind.

1 North Audley Street,
April 30, 1831.

On Monday last I drove to Apsley House, without the slightest suspicion that the Duchess had been worse than when I had last seen her. When I saw the gate only just opened enough to let out the porter's head, and saw Smith parleying with him, nothing occurred to me but that the man doubted whether I was a person who ought to be

[1] Groombridge Place.

admitted; so I put out my card, when Smith, returning, said, "Ma'am, the *Duchess of Wellington died on Saturday morning!*"

The good-natured porter, seeing that I was "really a friend," as he said, went into the house at my request, to ask if I could see her maid; and after a few minutes the gates opened softly, and I went into that melancholy house, into that great, silent hall: window-shutters closed: not a creature to be seen or heard.

At last a man-servant appeared, and as I moved towards the side of the house where I had formerly been—"Not that way, ma'am; walk in here, if you please."

Then came, in black, that maid, of whose attachment the Duchess had, the last time I saw her, spoken so highly and truly, as I now saw by the first look and words.

"Too true, ma'am—*she* is gone from us! her Grace died on Saturday."

"Was the Duke in town?"

"Yes, ma'am, BESIDE HER."

Not a word more, but I was glad to have that certain. Lord Charles had arrived in time; not Lord Douro. The Duchess had remained much as I last saw her on the sofa for a fortnight; then confined to her bed some days, but then seemed much better; had been up again, and out in that room and on that sofa, as when we heard her conversing so charmingly. They had no apprehension of her danger, nor had she herself till Friday, when she was seized with violent pain, and died on Saturday morning, "calm and resigned."

The poor maid could hardly speak. She went in and brought me a lock of her mistress's hair, silver gray, all but a few light brown, that just recalled the beautiful Kitty Pakenham!

So ended that sweet, innocent—shall we say happy, or unhappy life? Happy, I should think, *through all;* happy in her good feelings and good conscience, and warm affections, still LOVING on! Happy in her faith, her hope, and her charity!

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

LONDON, *May* 6, 1831.

One of our farewell visits yesterday was to Mrs. Lushington; and when we had talked our fill about our brother Pakenham, we went to politics, of which every head in London is fuller than it can hold. Lord Suffield described the scene in the House of Lords[1] as more extraordinary than could have been imagined or believed. One lord held down by force, and one bawling at the top of his voice, even when the door opened, and the King appeared as his lordship pronounced the word "RUIN!"

Ruin did not seize the King, however, nor was he in the least affected by the uproar. He walked calmly on.

"I kept my eye upon him," Lord Suffield said; "I looked at his knees, they did not tremble in the least. I am sure I could not have walked so firmly; I do not believe another man present could have been so calm."

The King quietly took out his paper, felt for his spectacles, put them on composedly, and read with a firm voice. They say nothing was ever like the confusion and violence since the time of Charles I. and Cromwell.

The day before yesterday we did a prodigious deal. Mr. Drummond came at ten o'clock, by appointment, to take us to the Mint, to see the double printing press;

[1] On the opening of Parliament, when the King was to propose the bringing in of the Reform Bill.

and we saw everything, from the casting the types to the drying the sheet; and then to the India House. There was some little stop while Pakenham's card, with a pencil message to Dr. Wilkins, was sent up. While this was doing, a superb mock-majesty man, in scarlet cloak and cocked hat, bedizened with gold, motioned us away. "Coachman, drive on; no carriage can stand before the India House—that's the rule."

Dr. Wilkins came out of his comfortable den to receive us, laid down his book and spectacles, and showed us everything. The strangest thing we saw was a toy of Tippoo Sahib's, worthy of a despot—an English soldier, as large as life, in his uniform, hat, and everything, painted and varnished, lying at full length, and a furious tiger over him; a handle, invisible at a distance, in his ribs, which, when turned by the slave, produced sounds like the growling of the tiger and the groans of the man!

We had a very pleasant day at Epping. Mrs. Napier went with us; I inside with her, Fanny on the barouche-seat with Pakenham, and Lestock behind with Sneyd. The place is so much improved! I saw Fanny's horse Baronet: very pretty.

2 o'clock, Luncheon.

Pakenham is eating his last bit of gooseberry pie: enter Sneyd: boxes—hammering—dreadful notes of preparation. Pakenham yesterday wore the trefoil pin with his aunt's hair, and the sleeve-buttons with his mother's and sister's hair; and I have added a locket to hang to his watch-chain, with a bit, very scarce, of my own hair. The wind is fair: we shall hear from him from Deal.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

NORTH AUDLEY STREET,
May 7, 1831.

I wrote to Harriet yesterday all about Pakenham to the moment he left this house with Sneyd to join Lestock in the City, and go on to Gravesend.

Half an hour after we had parted from Pakenham, and before we had recovered sense, came a great rap at the door. "Will you see anybody, ma'am?" I was going to say, "No, nobody," but I bid Smith ask the name, when behind him, as I spoke, enter Mrs. Lushington. "I have forced my way up—forgive me, it is for Pakenham; I hope I am not too late; I've brought him *good* letters from Mrs. Charles Lushington."

Comprehending instantly the value of the letters, and our carriage being most luckily at the door, into it Fanny and I got, and drove as hard as we could down to the dock, to the very place where they were to take the Gravesend boat. You may imagine the anxiety we were in to be in time, boat waiting for no one; and then the stoppages of odious carts and hackney coaches in the City: I do not believe we spoke three words to each other all that long way. At last, when within a few minutes of the end of our time, we were encompassed with carts, drays, and omnibuses, in an impenetrable line seemingly before us. Fanny sent Smith on foot with the letters and a pencil note. We got on wonderfully, our coachman being really an angel. We reached the wharf. "Is the Gravesend boat gone?" "No, ma'am, not this half-hour; half after four, instead of four, to-day."

We took breath, but were still anxious, watching each with head out on our own side; for Smith had not appeared, and Lestock, Sneyd, and Pakenham had not

arrived: great fear of missing them and the letters in the hurly-burly of packages, and packers, and passengers, and sailors, and *orderers*, and hackney coaches, and coachmen, and boatmen, men, women, and children swarming and bawling.

But at last Smith and Lestock appeared together, and the letters got into Pakenham's hand: he and Sneyd had gone into the boat, so we saw no more of them; but Lestock sent us off on a new hurry-skurry for pistols, ordered but not brought. To the Minerva counting-house we drove, to send the pistols by some boatswain there: got to counting-house: "Boatswain gone?" "No, ma'am, not yet," said the dear, smiling clerk. So all was right, and Pakenham had his pistols.

SALDEN HOUSE, MRS. CARR'S,
June 6, 1831.

My last days in London crowned the whole in all that was entertaining, curious, gratifying, and delightful to head and heart. I am writing while Isabella Carr is reading out *Destiny*, and very well she reads the Scotch; so you may think I cannot enter into details of the past at present, but I must just note—

Lady Elizabeth Whitbread and four Lady Harleys.

Opera with Lady Guilford and two daughters: *Medea*, Pasta: thrilling shiver, gliding sideways to her children, and sudden retreat.

French play: Leontine Fay in *Une Faute*—the most admirable actress I ever saw, and in the most touching piece. Three young men—Mr. Whitbread, Major Keppel, and Lord Mahon—separately told me the impression made on them by this actress was such that they could not sleep afterwards! I had no trial how this would be with

me, because we went off from the playhouse to Sir James South's, to see the occultation of Jupiter's satellites: that was indeed a sublime reality, and no wonder we were broad awake till three o'clock.

Next morning St. Paul's: moral sublime. I sat next Rammohun Roy, and heard all he said. One curious inquiry he made; "Why are the boys set *above* the girls?" Sermon by the Bishop of Nova Scotia: Judge Haliburton sat between Fanny and me. Luncheon at the Bishop of Llandaff's: forty people. Came home: packed up. Mr. Creed at dinner, and this last day delightful.

To CAPTAIN BASIL HALL.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *August* 14, 1831.

'My last visit to universal London confirms to my own feelings your eulogium. I never was so happy there in my life, because I had besides all the external pleasures, the solid satisfaction of a home there, and domestic pleasures, without which I should soon grow a-weary of the world, and wish the business of the town were done. I should be very sorry if I were told this minute that I was never to see London again, and yet I am wondrous contented and happy at home. I hope you will come and see some time whether I am only making believe or telling true.

You say I must never say a discouraging word to you, because you are so easily discouraged: for shame! What is that but saying, "Flatter me"? Now flattery can never do good; twice cursed in the giving and the receiving, it ought to be. Instead of flattering I will give you this wholesome caution: in your new volumes do not weaken the effect by giving too much of a good thing; do not be

lengthy; cut well before you go to press, and then the rest will live all the better. With your facility, this cannot cost you much.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

ROSTREVOR,[1] *Oct.* 2, 1831.

Lestock was gratified by my joining him at Armagh. Mr. Allott was most hospitable. We walked to the cathedral, and saw views of great extent and beauty, and heard learned disquisitions about architecture, and a curious anecdote in support of a favourite theory of his, that small stones *grouted* together, with lime and water put in hot, defies old Time. Great alarm was excited some time ago at Winchester Cathedral: the principal pillars seemed to be giving way, out of the perpendicular, and *bulged.* They fell to work *shoring* and propping; but, in spite of all, the pillars still seemed to be giving way more and more, and they feared the whole would come down. Rennie was sent for, but Rennie was ill, and died. At last an architect looked at the pillars, picked at them, took off a facing of stone, and found, what he had suspected, that it was only this facing that had given way and bulged, and that the inside was a solid pillar of masonry,—small stones grouted together so firmly that the cement was as hard as the stone.

Dr. and Mrs. Robinson came in the evening: his conversation is admirable; such an affluence of ideas, so full of genius and master thoughts. He gave me an excellent disquisition on the effect which transcendental mathematics produces on the mind, and traced up the history of mathematics from Euclid, appealing to diagrams

[1] Where the Miss Ruxtons were now living.

and resting on images, to that higher sort where they are put out of the question, where we reason by symbols as in algebra, and work on in the dark till they get to the light, or till the light comes out of the dark—sure that it will come out. He went over Newton, and on through the history of modern times—Brinkley, Lagrange, Hamilton—just giving to me, ignorant, a notion of what each had done.

Mrs. O'Beirne—dear, kind soul!—would accompany me on the jaunting-car all the way from Newry to Rostrevor, and I am very glad she did; and as the day was fine and the tide in, I thought it would be pleasant on that beautiful road; and so it would have been, but for the droves of cows—Oh, those weary cows with the longest horns!—and if ever I laughed at you for being afraid of cows, you may have your revenge now. Every quarter of a mile, at least, came a tangled mass of these brutes, and their fright made them more terrible, for they knew no more what they were doing than I did myself; and there I was sitting at their mercy, and the horn of one or t'other continually within an inch of my eye, my mouth, or my breast, and no retreat; and they might any moment stick me on the top of one of these horns, and toss me with one jerk into the sea! Mrs. O'Beirne kept telling me she was used to it, and that nothing ever happened; but by the time I reached Rostrevor I was as poor a worn-out rag as ever you saw.

To MISS RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Dec.* 22, 1831.

Francis was married on the 19th to Rosa Florentina Eroles; Sneyd, Fanny, and Lestock were present. The

bride was dressed in a plain white muslin, with a mantilla lace veil of her own work on her head, without any hat, after the fashion of her own country, with a small wreath of silver flowers in her dark hair. Her sister was dressed English fashion, in a bonnet. Both Sneyd and Fanny say that nothing could appear more gentlemanlike, gentle, amiable, and happy than the bridegroom.

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *April* 20, 1832.

Can you conceive yourself to be an old lamp at the point of extinction, and dreading the smell you would make at going out, and the execrations which in your dying flickerings you might hear? And then you can conceive the sudden starting up again of the flame, when fresh oil is poured into the lamp. And can you conceive what that poor lamp would feel, returning to light and life? So felt I when I had read your letter on reading what I sent to you of *Helen*. You have given me new life and spirit to go on with her. I would have gone on from principle, and the desire to do what my father advised—to finish whatever I began; but now I feel all the difference between working for a dead or a live horse.

My auriculas are superb, and my peony tree has eighteen full-swelled buds: it will be in glory by the time Sophy and Mag arrive.

To HER SISTER HARRIET—MRS. R. BUTLER.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Aug.* 1, 1832.

It is impossible to tell you how much I miss you. Never, except at my Aunt Ruxton's, did I ever pass my

time away from home so entirely to my own enjoyment. Not a cloud obscured the cheerful sky.

We are reading *Eugene Aram;* and almost all I have heard I think affected as to language, and not natural as to character. I am sure the real story and trial are much more interesting.

Aug. 21.

Perhaps you think I am at Lady Hartland's at this moment, poor ignorants, as you are! You must know that I was so unwell on Friday, the morning of the day we were to have gone there, that my poor mother was obliged to send James in the rain (poor James!) to put off till Monday; so Lord and Lady Hartland were very sorry and very glad, and sent us divine peaches.

Sir James Calendar Campbell's *Memoirs* are ill-written —all higgledy-piggledy, facts and anecdotes, some without heads, and some without tails; great cry and little wool, still, some of the wool is good; and curious facts thrown out, of which he does not know the value, and other things he values that have no value in nature.

To MISS RUXTON.

PAKENHAM HALL, *Sept.* 19, 1832.

We came here yesterday to meet Caroline Hamilton—dear Caroline Hamilton, and her sensible, agreeable husband. She is always the same, and the sight of her affectionate, open, lively countenance does one's heart good. Lord Longford quite well, and Lord Longford for ever: the children beautiful.

FIVE P.M.

We have been walking and driving all morning, and seeing all that Lady Longford has done in beautifying the

place and employing the people. I never saw, in England or Ireland, such beautiful gardens—the most beautiful American garden my eyes ever beheld. She took advantage of a group of superb old chestnut-trees, with oak and ash for a background, which had never been noticed in that *terra incognita;* now it is a fairy land, embowered round with evergreens.

To-morrow Hercules and Mrs. Pakenham come, with all their children—a party of thirteen!

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Oct.* 9, 1832.

I send you one dozen out of two dozen ranunculus roots, which good, kind, dying Lady Pakenham sent to me, with a note as fresh in feeling as youth could dictate.

To MR. BANNATYNE.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Nov.* 12, 1832.

The death of Sir Walter Scott has filled us all, as his private friends and admirers, with sorrow. I do not mean that we could have wished the prolongation of his life such as it had been for the last months; quite the contrary: but we feel poignant anguish from the thought that such a life as his was prematurely shortened—that such faculties, such a genius, such as is granted but once in an age, once in many ages, should have been extinguished of its light, of its power to enlighten and vivify the world, long before its natural term for setting! Whatever the errors may have been, oh, what have been the unremitted, generous, alas! overstrained exertions of that noble nature!

To MISS RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Nov.* 15, 1832.

Thank you, I am quite well. My only *complaint* is that I never can do any day as much as I intended, and am always as much hurried by the dressing-bell as I am at this instant.

Lord Longford and Lord Silchester called here to-day on their way back from Longford and Castle Forbes; they sat till late; very agreeable. When I congratulated Lord Longford on having done so much at Pakenham Hall, and upon having still something to do, he answered, "Oh yes, I never was intended for a finished gentleman!"

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Dec.* 28, 1832.

I send Mr. Lockhart's letter on the subscription for Abbotsford; it does him honour. I combated, however, his feelings with all the feelings and reasons I have on the opposite side—that it is a national tribute, honourable, not degrading. I refused to give him Scott's letters for publication, and very painful it was to me to refuse him, at present, anything he asked; but principle and consistency, painful or not, required it, besides my own feelings. I could not bear to publish Sir Walter's praises of myself, and affectionate expressions and private sentiments. I did send one letter to Mr. Lockhart, exemplifying what I mean—the beautiful letter on his changing fortunes. As to the subscription, all depends on whether the quantity of good produced will balance the pain to the family. It would gratify me to give the £100 I set apart for the purpose, but then comes the question, with or without my name? If with, there is staring me in the face OSTENTATION. If

without—set down as from an "Unknown Friend"—AFFECTATION.

Crampton said my name would be useful, and so I suppose I should do what would best serve the cause, and put out of the question all consideration of what may be thought of myself.

Miss Edgeworth's novel of *Helen*, begun in 1830, was finished in the summer of 1833, and read for family criticism, before being sent to the press.

C. S. EDGEWORTH *to* MRS. C. S. EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *May* 27, 1833.

After breakfast yesterday I had a stroll with Mrs. Edgeworth through Maria's flower-garden. I wish you could see her peony tree: it is in the very perfection of bloom, as indeed everything is here. After luncheon dinner, the pony-carriage came round, but was refused by all: however, as I was putting in execution my long-formed project of getting a ladder and making the ladies go up into the sycamore-tree with me, we drove that far. I fixed the ladder: I went up, and Fanny, Harriet, and Honora, with a little hesitation, followed. They were all delighted with this airy parlour, lined with the softest, thickest moss; natural seats with backs, a delightful peep of the house, gay parterres and groves. It was amusing, Mrs. Edgeworth's and Maria's surprise when called to from above, as they passed in the carriage. Then we drove round Francis's new walk through the Horse Park fields: beautiful. Then the ladies flocked to their flower-beds, and I

was accompanied by one or two in my rambles, speaking to old workmen, and bribing new to banish the sparrows. After tea much talking, and a little reading; Harriet read out a new story by Mr. Brittain, who wrote *Hyacinth O'Gara*, and whom I knew at college.

This morning was everything that was exquisite, and I have since breakfast had the gardener and heaps of workmen, and have been sawing beech-branches, to my great satisfaction and the approval of others; and in criticism I have found all agree with me, for *Helen* is begun, and at eleven we meet in the library; and Harriet has read aloud four chapters. It is altogether in Maria's best style; and I think the public will like it as hers, the return to an old friend.

31st.

I am sure you would like the cheerful fusion of this home party: each star is worthy of separate observation for its serenity, brilliancy, or magnitude; but it is as a constellation they claim most regard, linked together by strong attachment, and moving in harmony through their useful course. The herons sail about and multiply, the rookery is banished, the reign of tulips now almost o'er, and peonies of many bells are taking their place.

I am a stranger to any book but *Helen*, scarcely looking at the newspaper, which Mr. Butler devours. Harriet has gone in the pony-carriage for Molly, and she is to be driven by Francis's walk and Maria's garden.

June 1.

Aunt Mary's[1] interest in *Helen* is delightful. Never did the whole family appear to more advantage; the

[1] Mrs. Mary Sneyd.

accordance of opinion, yet cheerfulness of discussion, is charming.

When the evening reading of *Helen* was finished, Harriet and I walked round the lawn; the owls shrieking and flitting by in pursuit of bats: clouds in endless varieties in the unsettled heavens. The library, as we looked in at it through the windows, with all its walls and pictures lighted up by the lamps, looked beautiful. I thought how my father would have been touched to look in as we did on his assembled family.

MARIA *to* M. PAKENHAM EDGEWORTH, ESQ.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN,
Valentine's Day, 1834.

The herons this day (according to their custom as Sophy tells me) sat all in a row in the horse park in solemn deliberation upon their own affairs: the opening of their budget I suppose. They have much upon their hands this session, and there must be a battle soon, on which the fate of the empire must depend; magpies and scarecrows abound, and such clouds of starlings darkened the air for many minutes opposite the library window, settling at last upon the three great beech trees, that Sophy and I would have given a crown imperial you had been by, dear Pakenham, to see them.

You ended your Journal and the announcement of your appointment to Amballa with exulting in the new kingdoms of flowers you would have to subdue, and with the hope that your mother would write to Lady Pakenham for her delightful letter to her son. You will have heard long before this reaches you, my dear, that Lady Pakenham is no more; she died last autumn. I wish that this news

could have reached that kind heart of hers. Honora and I went the very day we received your journal to Coolure, to thank Admiral Pakenham; he met us on the steps in a tapestry nightcap. He has grown very old, and has had several strokes of palsy, but none have touched his heart. When Honora read to him the whole passage out of your journal and your own warm expressions of pleasure and gratitude, life and joy lighted in his dear old eyes. Honora only changed the words, "dear Lady Pakenham" into the "dear Pakenhams of Coolure." He asked, "Who wrote?" and looked very earnestly in my eyes. I was afraid to say Lady Pakenham, and I answered, "You know," and pressed his hand. He did know, passed his hand over his eyes and said, "Like her: she was a good woman."

February 19.

I yesterday found in my writing-desk a copy I had made of the letter Lord Carrington wrote to me in answer to mine announcing your former Futtehgur appointment; and now that it can go free I enclose it. I like an expression of Lord Mahon's about him in a note I lately received from him. "My grandfather is in excellent health, and I cannot offer you a better wish than that you may at eighty-one possess the same activity, the same quickness of intellect, the same gushing, warm-hearted benevolence which distinguishes him." Gushing benevolence: I like that expression.

Sophy despatched a letter for you last week, in which I am sure she told you all domestic occurrences. Barry has bought Annaghmore in the King's County: an excellent house; and Sophy and Barry and all the children are to stay with us till Sophy's health—very delicate—is strengthened, and till they have furnished what rooms they

mean to inhabit at Annamore; this looks better than with the *gh*, but Sophy stickles for the old Irish spelling.

Molly and Hetty, and Crofton and child, are all flourishing; poor old George is declining as gently and comfortably as can be. When we go to see him, his eyes light up and his mouth crinkles into smiles, and he, as well as Molly, never fails to ask for Master Pakenham. Though *Helen* cannot reach you for a year, Fanny has desired Bentley to send you a copy before it is published. I should tell you beforehand that there is no humour in it, and no Irish character. It is impossible to draw Ireland as she now is in a book of fiction—realities are too strong, party passions too violent to bear to see, or care to look at their faces in the looking-glass. The people would only break the glass, and curse the fool who held the mirror up to nature—distorted nature, in a fever. We are in too perilous a case to laugh, humour would be out of season, worse than bad taste. Whenever the danger is past, as the man in the sonnet says,

> We may look back on the hardest part and laugh.

Then I shall be ready to join in the laugh. Sir Walter Scott once said to me, "Do explain to the public why Pat, who gets forward so well in other countries, is so miserable in his own." A very difficult question: I fear above my power. But I shall think of it continually, and listen, and look, and read.

Thank you, my dear brother, for your excellent and to me particularly interesting last letter, in which you copied for me the good observations on the state of your part of India, and the collection of the revenue, rents, etc. Many of the observations on India apply to Ireland; similarity of certain general causes operating on human nature even in

countries most different and with many other circumstances dissimilar, produce a remarkable resemblance in human character and conduct. I admire your generous indignation against oppression and wringing by "any indirection from the poor peasant his vile trash." Some of the disputes that you have to settle at Cucherry, and some of the viewings that you record of boundaries, etc., about which there are quarrels, put me in mind of what I am called upon to do here continually in a little way.

I hope Honora and Sophy have given you satisfaction about the exact place of the new walks; as I cannot draw I can do nothing in that way, but I can tell you that I have been planting rhododendrons and arbutus in front of the euonymus tree. I hope you will have a good garden in your new residence, and that you will not be too hot in it. How you could find that your having more to do, made you more able to endure the horrid heat you describe, passes my comprehension. Heat always makes me so indolent, imbecile, and irritable. I remember all this in the only heat *to call heat*, that I was ever exposed to in Paris and Switzerland; I could not even speak, much less write. If I had been under your 107 degrees I should have melted away to the very bone, and never, never, never could have penned that *dropping* letter as you did to Honora, and with that *puddle* ink too. Well! we are very, very, very much obliged to you, dear Pakenham, for all the labour you go through for us, and we hope that under the shade of the Himalaya mountains you will be able to write at your ease and without all manner of *stodge* in your ink.

21*st*.

This morning brought through Harriet, Margaret Craig's joy at your promotion, and——Honora says I

must go out this delightful sunshine morning, and look at all the full-blown crocuses, violets, heath, and pyrus japonica. I have a standard pyrus now—vulgar things compared with your *Indian Prides*.

Oh! my dear Pakenham, I am sure you are shocked at the death of Sir John Malcolm! both he and Sir James Macintosh, the two whose genius you so admired, and whose conversation you so enjoyed just before you left England—both gone!

March 8.

Ever since I finished my last to you I have had my head so immersed in accounts that I have never been able till this moment to fulfil my intention of giving you my travels in Connemara.

I travelled with Sir Culling and Lady Smith (Isabella Carr). Sir Culling, of old family, large fortune and great philanthropy, extending to poor little Ireland and her bogs, and her Connemara, and her penultimate barony of Erris and her ultimate Giants' Causeway, and her beautiful lake of Killarney. And all these things he determined to see. Infant and nurse, and lady's-maid, and gentleman's gentleman, and Sir Culling and the fair Isabella all came over to Ireland last September, just as Fanny had left us, and she meeting them in Dublin, and conceiving that nurse and baby would not do for Connemara, wrote confidentially to beg us to invite them to stay at Edgeworthstown, while father and mother, and maid, and man, were to proceed on their travels. They spent a pleasant week, I hope, at Edgeworthstown. I am sure Honora did everything that was possible to make it pleasant to them, and we regretted a million of times that your mother was not at home. Sir Culling expected to have had all manner of information as to roads, distances, and time, but Mrs. Edgeworth not being

at home, and Miss Edgeworth's local knowledge being such as you know, you may guess how he was disappointed. Mr. Shaw and the Dean of Ardagh, who dined with him here, gave him directions as far as Ballinasloe and a letter to the clergyman there. The fair of Ballinasloe was just beginning, and Sir Culling was determined to see that, and from thence, after studying the map of Ireland and road-books one evening, he thought he should get easily to Connemara, Westport, and the Barony of Erris, see all that in a week, and come back to Edgeworthstown, take up Bambino and proceed on a northern or a southern tour.

You will be surprised that I should—seeing they knew so little what they were about—have chosen to travel with them; and I confess it was imprudent and very unlike my usual dislike to leave home without any of my own people with me. But upon this occasion I fancied I should see all I wanted to see of the wonderful ways of going on and manners of the natives better for not being with any of my own family, and especially for its not being suspected that I was an authoress and might put them in a book. In short, I thought it was the best opportunity I could ever have of seeing a part of Ireland which, from time immemorial, I had been curious to see. My curiosity had been raised even when I first came to Ireland fifty years ago, by hearing my father talk of the King of Connemara, and his immense territory, and his ways of ruling over his people with almost absolute power, with laws of his own, and setting all other laws at defiance. Smugglers and caves, and murders and mermaids, and duels, and banshees, and fairies, were all mingled together in my early associations with Connemara and Dick Martin,—"Hair-trigger Dick," who cared so little for his own life or the life of man, and so much for the life of animals, who fought more duels

than any man of even his "Blue-blaze-devil" day, and who brought the bill into Parliament for preventing cruelty to animals; thenceforward changing his cognomen from "Hair-trigger Dick" to "Humanity Martin." He was my father's contemporary, and he knew a number of anecdotes of him. *Too besides*, I once saw him, and remember that my blood crept slow and my breath was held when he first came into the room, a pale, little insignificant-looking mortal he was, but he still kept hold of my imagination, and his land of Connemara was always a land I longed to visit. Long afterwards, a book which I believe you read, *Letters from the Irish Highlands*, written by the family of Blakes of Renvyle, raised my curiosity still further, and wakened it for new reasons, in a new direction. Further and further and higher, Nimmo and William deepened my interest in that country, and, in short, and at length all these motives worked together. Add to them a book called *Wild Sports of the West*, of which Harriet read to me all the readable parts till I rolled with laughing. Add also that I had lately heard Mr. Rothwell give a most entertaining account of a tour he had taken in Erris, and to the house of a certain Major Bingham who must be the most diverting and extraordinary original upon earth—and shall I die without seeing him? thought I—now or never.

At the first suggestion I uttered that I should like to see him and Erris, and the wonders of Connemara, Lady Culling Smith and Sir Culling burst into delight at the thought of having me as their travelling companion, so it was all settled in a moment. Honora approved, Aunt Mary hoped it would all turn out to my satisfaction, and off we set with four horses mighty grand in their travelling carriage, which was a summer friend, open or half-open. A half head stuck up immovable with a window at each

ear, an apron of wood, varnished to look like japanned leather hinged at bottom, and having at top where it shuts a sort of fairy-board window which lets down in desperately bad weather.

Our first day was all prosperous and sunshine, and what Captain Beaufort would call plain sailing. To Ballymahon the first stage. Do you remember Ballymahon, and the first sight of the gossamer in the hedges sparkling with dew, going there packed into the chaise with your four sisters and me to see the museum of a Mr. Smith, who had a Cellini cup and a Raphael plate, and miniatures of Madame de Maintenon, and wonders innumerable—but Sophy at this moment tells me that I am insisting upon your remembering things that happened before you were born, and that even Francis was only one year old at the time of this breakfast, and it was she herself who was so delighted with that first view of the gossamer in the glittering sunshine.

But I shall never get on to Athlone, much less to Connemara. Of Athlone I have nothing to say but what you may learn from the *Gazetteer*, except that, while we were waiting in the antiquated inn there, while horses were changing, I espied a print hanging smoked over the chimney-piece, which to my *connoisseur* eyes seemed marvellously good, and upon my own judgment I proposed for it to the landlady, and bought it for five shillings (frame excepted); and when I had it out of the frame, and turned it round, I found my taste and judgment gloriously justified. It was from a picture of Vandyke's—the death of Belisarius; and here it is now hanging up in the library, framed in satin wood, the admiration of all beholders, Barry Fox above all.

But to proceed. It was no easy matter to get out of

Athlone, for at the entrance to the old-fashioned, narrowest of narrow bridges we found ourselves wedged and blocked by drays and sheep, reaching at least a mile; men cursing and swearing in Irish and English; sheep baaing, and so terrified, that the shepherds were in transports of fear brandishing their crooks at our postillions, and the postillions in turn brandishing their whips on the impassive backs of the sheep. The cocked gold-edged hat of an officer appeared on horseback in the midst, and there was silence from all but the baaing sheep. He bowed to us ladies, or to our carriage and four, and assured us that he would see us safe out, but that it would be a work of time. While this work of time was *going* on, one pushed his way from behind, between sheep and the wheel on my side of the carriage, and putting in his head called out to me, "Miss Edgeworth, if you are in it, my master's in town, and will be with you directly almost, with his best compliments. He learned from the landlady your name. He was in the inn that minute, receiving rents he is, if you will be kind enough to wait a minute, and not stir *out of that.*"

Kind enough I was, for I could not help myself, if I had been ever so unkindly disposed towards my unknown friend. Up came, breathless, a well-known friend, Mr. Strickland. Introduced amidst the baaing of the sheep to my travelling companions, and, as well as I could make myself heard in the din, I made him understand where we were going next, and found, to my great satisfaction, that he would overtake us next day at Ballinasloe, if we could stay there next day; and we could and must, for it was Sunday. I cannot tell you—and if I could you would think I exaggerated—how many hours we were in getting through the next ten miles; the road being continually covered with sheep, thick as wool could pack, all *coming*

from the sheep-fair of Ballinasloe, which, to Sir Culling's infinite mortification, we now found had taken place the previous day. I am sure we could not have had a better opportunity and more leisure to form a sublime and just notion of the thousands and tens of thousands which must have been on the field of sale. This retreat of the ten thousand never could have been effected without the generalship of these wonderfully skilled shepherds, who, in case of any disorder among their troops, know how dexterously to take the offender by the left leg or the right leg with their crooks, pulling them back without ever breaking a limb, and keeping them continually in their ranks on the weary, long march.

We did not reach Ballinasloe till it was almost dark. There goes a story, you know, that no woman must ever appear at Ballinasloe Fair; that she would be in imminent peril of her life from the mob. The daughters of Lord Clancarty, it was said, "had tried it once, and scarce were saved by fate." Be this as it may, we were suffered to drive very quietly through the town; and we went quite through it to the outskirts of scattered houses, and stopped at the door of the Vicarage. And well for us that we had a letter from the Dean of Ardagh to the Rev. Mr. Pounden, else we might have spent the night in the streets, or have paid guineas apiece for our beds, all five of us, for three nights. Mr. and Mrs. Pounden were the most hospitable of people, and they were put to a great trial—dinner just over, and that day had arrived unexpectedly one family of relations, and expectedly another, with children without end. And how they did stow them and us, to this hour I cannot conceive: they had, to be sure, one bed-chamber in a house next door, which, luckily, Lord and Lady Somebody had not arrived to occupy. Be it how it might, here

we stayed till Monday; and on Sunday there was to be a charity sermon for the benefit of the schools, under the patronage of Lord and Lady Clancarty, and the sermon was preached by Archdeacon Pakenham; and after the sermon—an excellent sermon on the appropriate text of the good Samaritan—an immense crowd before the windows filled the fair green, and we went out to see. The crowd of good, very good-natured Irishmen, gentle and simple mixed, opened to let the ladies and English stranger in to see: and fine horses and fine leaping we saw, over a loose wall built up for the purpose in the middle of the fair green; and such shouting, and such laughing, and such hurraing for those that cleared and for those that missed. As for the rest of the cattle-fair, we *lift* on Monday morning before the thick of it came on.

I forgot to tell you that on Sunday arrived Mr. Strickland, and he with maps and road-books explained to Sir Culling where he should go, and how he was to accomplish his objects. It was settled that we were to go to Loughrea, and to see certain ruins by going a few miles out of our way; and this we accomplished, and actually did see, by an uncommonly fine sunset, the beautiful ruins of Clonmacnoise; and we slept this night at Loughrea, where we had been assured there was a capital inn, and may be it was, but the rats or the mice ran about my room so, and made such a noise in the holes of the floor, that I could not sleep, but was thankful they did not get on or into my bed.

Next day to Galway, and still it was fine weather, and bright for the open carriage, and we thought it would always be so. Galway, wet or dry, and it was dry when I saw it, is the dirtiest town I ever saw, and the most desolate and idle-looking. As I had heard much from Captain Beaufort and Louisa of the curious Spanish buildings in

Galway, I was determined not to go through the town without seeing these; so, as soon as we got to the inn, I summoned landlord and landlady, and begged to know the names of the principal families in the town. I thought I might chance to light upon somebody who could help us. In an old history of Galway which Mr. Strickland picked up from a stall at Ballinasloe, I found prints of some of the old buildings and names of the old families; and the landlord having presented me with a list as long as an alderman's bill of fare of the names of the gentlemen and ladies of Galway, I pitched upon the name of a physician, a Dr. Veitch, of whom I had found a fine character in my book. He had been very good to the poor during a year of famine and fever. To him I wrote, and just as I had finished reading his panegyric to Lady Smith, in he walked; and he proved to be an old acquaintance. He was formerly a surgeon in the army, and was quartered at Longford at the time of the rebellion: remembered our all taking shelter there, how near my father was being killed by the mob, and how courageously he behaved. Dr. Veitch had received some kindness from him, and now he seemed anxious, thirty-five years afterwards, to return that kindness to me and my companions. He walked with us all over Galway, and showed us all that was worth seeing, from the new quay *projecting*, and the new green Connemara marble-cutters' workshop, to the old Spanish houses with projecting roofs and piazza walks beneath; and, wading through seas of yellow mud thick as stirabout, we went to see archways that had stood centuries, and above all to the old mayoralty house of that mayor of Galway who hung his own son; and we had the satisfaction of seeing the very window from which the father with his own hands hung his own son, and the black marble marrowbones and death's head, and

inscription and date, 1493. I daresay you know the story; it formed the groundwork very lately of a tragedy. The son had—from jealousy as the tragedy has it, from avarice according to the vulgar version—killed a Spanish friend; and the father, a modern Brutus, condemns him, and then goes to comfort him. I really thought it worth while to wade through mud to see these awful old relics of other times and other manners. But, coming back again, at every turn it was rather disagreeable to have "fish" bawled into one's ears, and "fine flat fish" flapped in one's face. The fish-market was fresh supplied, and Galway is famous for *John Dorees*. "A John Doree, ma'am, for eighteenpence—a shilling—sixpence!" A John Doree could not be had for guineas in London. Quin, the famous actor, wished he was all throat when he was eating a John Doree. But still it was not pleasant, at every turn and every crossing, to have ever so fine John Dorees flapped in one's face. Sir Culling bought one for sixpence, and it was put into the carriage; and we took leave of Dr. Veitch, and left Galway.

From Galway Sir Culling was obliged to take job horses, as he was warned that we were entering a country where post horses were not to be found, and were never even heard of. Dr. Veitch bid us not think of entering Connemara this night. "You will have to send after me soon, if you don't take care. You have no idea of the places you are going into, and that you may have to sleep in."

The next place we were to go to, and where Dr. Veitch advised us to sleep, was Outerard, a small town or village, where he told us was an inn, or an hotel, as even in these out-of-the-world regions it is now called. It was but fifteen miles, and this with four horses was not two hours' drive; and Sir Culling thought it would be sad waste of daylight to sleep at Outerard, for still he measured his expected

rate of travelling by his Bath Road standard. Though we left Galway at three, we were not at Outerard till past seven, with our fine, fresh horses; and excellent horses they really were, and well harnessed too, with well-accoutred postillions in dark blue jackets and good hats and boots, all proper, and an ugly little dog running joyously along with the horses. Outerard, as well as we could see it, was a pretty mountain-scattered village, with a pond and trees, and a sort of terrace-road, with houses and gardens on one side, and a lower road with pond and houses on the other. There is a spa at Outerard to which bettermost sort of people come in the season; but this was not the season, and the place had that kind of desolate look, mixed with *pretensions* too, which a watering-place out of season always has.

When we came to the hotel, our hearts sank within us. Dusk as it was, there was light enough to guess, at first sight, that it would never do for sleeping—half covered with overgrown ivy, damp, forlorn, windows broken, shattered look all about it. With difficulty we got at the broken gate into the very small and dirty courtyard, where the four horses could hardly stand with the carriage. Out came such a master and such a maid! and such fumes of whiskey-punch and tobacco. Sir Culling got down from his barouche-seat, to look if the house was practicable; but soon returned, shaking his head, and telling us in French that it was quite impossible; and the master of the inn, with half threats, half laughter, assured us we should find no other place in Outerard. I inquired for the Priest's house. I was on the point of asking, "Has the Priest any family?" but recollected myself in time, and asked whether the Priest's house was large enough to hold us. "Not an atom of room to spare in it, ma'am." Then I inquired for

the Chief of the Police, the Clergyman, or the Magistrate? "Not in it, neither, none; but the Chief of the Police's house is there on the top of the hill; but you will not get in."

We went there, however, and up the hill toiled, and to the door of a sort of spruce-looking lanthorn of a house, without tree or shrub near it. But still it might be good to sleep in; and, nothing daunted by the maid's prophecies and ominous voice, we determined to try our fate. Sir Culling got down and rubbed his hands; while, after his man's knocking at the door several times, no one came to open it, though through the large drawing-room window we saw figures gliding about. At last the door half opened by hands unseen, and Sir Culling, pushing it wholly open, went in; and we sat in the carriage, waiting as patiently as we could. The figures in black and white came to the window, and each had pocket-handkerchiefs in their hands or at their eyes. Sir Culling reappeared, ordered the horses to be turned about again; and when he had remounted his barouche-seat, which he did with all convenient speed, he informed us that a lady had died in this house a few days before, of cholera; that she had this day been buried; that under any other circumstances the master and mistress would have been happy to receive us, but now it was quite impossible, for our sake and their own. The damp, broken-windowed hole was preferable; so back we went. But as we went along the *high* road, down in the *low* road on the other side of the pond, through the duskiness we saw lights in several houses; and in front of one long house which looked whiter than the rest, we stopped at an opening in the road where was a path which led to the valley beneath, and Sir Culling, who proved in this our need an active knight, sallied down to adventure another trial; and in a few minutes after *im*merging into this mud castle, and emerging

from it, he waved his arm over his head in sign of triumph, and made a sign to the postillions to turn down into the valley, which they did without overturning us; and to our satisfaction we found ourselves housed at Mrs. O'Flaherty's, who did not keep an inn, observe; her admitting us, observe, depended upon our clearly understanding that she did not so demean herself. But she in the season let her house as a boarding-house to the quality, who came to Outerard to drink the waters or to bathe. So, to oblige us poor travellers, without disgrace to the blood and high descent of the O'Flaherties, she took us in, as we were quality, and she turned her two sons out of their rooms and their beds for us; and most comfortably we were lodged. And we ate the John Doree we had brought with us, and I thought it not worth all the talking about it I had heard; and, for the first time in my days or nights, I this night tasted a *toombler* of anti-Parliament whiskey, *alias* poteen, and water; and of all the detestable tastes that ever went into my mouth, or smells that ever went under my nose, I think this was the worst—literally smoke and fire spirit. Isabella observed that she had often drank Innishowon and water with dear Agnes and Joanna Baillie. There's no disputing about tastes; therefore I did not dispute, only set down the tumbler, and sip took never more; for I could as soon have drank the chimney smoking. The doors, just opening with a latch, received us into our bed-rooms, with good turf fires on the hearth, coved ceilings, and presses, and all like bed-rooms in an English farm-house more than an Irish: wonderful comfortable for Outerard, after fear of the cholera and the dead woman especially.

Next day, sun shining and a good breakfast, our spirit of travelling adventure up within us, we determined that, before proceeding on our main adventure into Connemara, we

would make a little episode to see a wonderful cave in the neighbourhood. Our curiosity to see it had been excited by the story of the lady and the white trout in *Lover's Legends*. It is called the Pigeon-hole; not the least like a pigeon-hole, but it is a subterraneous passage, where a stream flows which joins the waters of Lough Corrib and Lough Mask. Outerard is on the borders of Lough Corrib, and we devoted this day to boating across Lough Corrib, to see this famous cavern, which is on the opposite side of the lake, and also to see a certain ruined monastery. We passed over the lake, admiring its beauty and its many islands—little bits of islands, of which the boatmen tell there are three hundred and sixty-five; be the same more or less, one for every day in the year at least. We saw the ruins, which are very fine; but I have not time to say more about them. We crossed the churchyard and a field or two, and all was as flat, and bare, and stony as can be imagined; and as we were going and going farther from the shore of the lake, I wondered how and when we were to come to this cavern. The guide called me to stop, and I stopped; and well I did: I was on the brink of the Pigeon-hole—just like an unfenced entrance to a deep deep well. The guide went down before us, and was very welcome! Down and down and down steps almost perpendicular, and as much as my little legs could do to reach from one to the other; darker and darker, and there were forty of them I am sure, well counted—though certainly I never counted them, but was right glad when I felt my feet at the bottom, on *terra firma* again, even in darkness, and was told to look up, and that I had come down sixty feet and more. I looked up and saw glimmering light at the top, and as my eyes recovered, more and more light through the large fern leaves which hung over the opening at top, and the whole

height above looked like the inside of a limekiln, magnified to gigantic dimensions, with lady-fern—it must be lady-fern, because of the fairies—and lichens, names unknown, hanging from its sides. The light of the sun now streaming in I saw plainly, and felt why the guide held me fast by the arm—I was on the brink of the very narrow dark stream of water, which flowed quite silently from one side of the cavern to the other! To that other side, my eye following the stream as it flowed, I now looked, and saw that the cavern opened under a high archway in the rock. How high that was, or how spacious, I had not yet light enough to discern. But now there appeared from the steps down which we had descended an old woman with a light in her hand. Our boy-guide hailed her by the name of Madgy Burke. She scrambled on a high jut of rock in the cavern; she had a bundle of straw under one arm, and a light flickering in the other hand, her grizzled locks streaming, her garments loose and tattered, all which became suddenly visible as she set fire to a great wisp of straw, and another and another she plucked from her bundle and lighted, and waved the light above and underneath. It was like a scene in a melodrama of Cavern and Witch—the best cavern scene I ever beheld. As she continued to throw down, from the height where she stood, the lighted bundles of straw, they fell on the surface of the dark stream below, and sailed down the current, under the arch of the cavern, lighting its roof at the vast opening, and looking like tiny fire-ships, one after another sailing on, and disappearing. We could not help watching each as it blazed, till it vanished. We looked till we were tired, then turned and clambered up the steps we had scrambled down, and found ourselves again in broad daylight, in upper air and on the flat field; and the illusion was over, and there stood, turned into a

regular old Irish beggar-woman, the Witch of Outerard, and Madgy Burke stood confessed, and began to higgle with Sir Culling and to flatter the English quality for a sixpence more.

Meanwhile we were to cross Lough Corrib; and well for us that we had the prudence to declare, early in the morning, that we would not take a sail-boat, for a sail-boat is dangerous in the sudden squalls which rise in these mountain regions and on these lakes, very like the Swiss lakes for that matter. For instance, on the Lake de Lucerne, I have seen sunshine and glassy surface change in five minutes to storm and cloud so black and thick, that Mont Pilate himself could not be discerned through it more than if he never stood there in all his sublimity.

Our day had changed, and very rough was the lake; and the boatmen, to comfort us and no doubt amuse themselves, as we rose up and down on the billows, told us stories of boats that had been lost in these storms, and of young Mr. Brown last year, that was drowned in a boat within view of his brother standing on that island, which we were just then to pass. "And when so near he could almost have reached him, you'd have thought."

"And why didn't he, then?" said I.

"Oh, bless you, ma'am, he couldn't; for," said the boatman, dropping his oar, which I did not like at all, "for, mind you, ma'am, it was all done in the clap of one's hand," and he clapped his hands.

"Well, take up your oar," cried I; which he did, and rowed amain, and we cleared Brown's Island, and I have no more dangers, fancied or other, to tell you; and after two hours' hard rowing, which may give you the measure of the width of Lough Corrib at this place, we landed, and were right glad to eat Mrs. O'Flaherty's ready dinner, Lough Corrib trout—not the White Lady trout.

Sir Culling had intended to pursue his road this evening and reach Lough Corrib Lodge to sleep, but before we got the first mouthful of dinner into our mouths it was stone-dark, whatever kind of darkness that is, and we agreed on old George's excellent principle to leave it till "morning, ma'am, if you please."

So the morning came, and a fine morning still it was; and we set out, leaving Mrs. O'Flaherty curtseying and satisfied. I cannot make out any wonders, or anything like an adventure between Outerard and Corrib Lodge; only the road was rough and the country like the Isle of Anglesea, as if stones and fragments of rock had showered down on the earth and tracts of bog-heath such as England never saw and Scotland seldom sees, except in the Highlands. We were only about twice the time that Sir Culling had calculated on getting over this part of the road with our powerful Galway horses and steady drivers, and reaching Corrib Lodge Sir Culling said: "These roads are not so very bad, we shall get on, Miss Edgeworth, very well, you will see."

Corrib Lodge is a neat bleak-looking house, which Mr. Nimmo built for his own residence when he was overseer of the roads, now turned into an inn, kept by his Scotch servant, who used to come with him to Edgeworthstown, and he gave us bread and butter and milk, and moreover, hare-soup, such as the best London tavern might have envied. For observe, that hares abound in these parts, and there is no sin in killing them, and how the cook came to be so good I cannot tell you, but so it certainly was. Invigorated and sanguine, we were ready to get into the carriage again, purposing to reach Clifden this evening—it was now three o'clock; we had got through half our thirty-six miles; no doubt we could easily, Sir Culling argued, manage the other half before dark. But our wary Scotch

host shook his head and observed, that if his late master Mr. Nimmo's road was but open so we might readily, but Mr. Nimmo's new road was not opened, and why, because it was not finished. Only one mile or so remained unfinished, and as that one mile of unmade unfinished road was impassable by man, boy, or Connemara pony, what availed the new road for our heavy carriage and four horses? There was no possibility of *going round*, as I proposed; we must go the old road, if road it could be called, all bog and bog-holes, as our host explained to us: "It would be wonderful if we could get over it, for no carriage had ever passed, nor ever thought of attempting to pass, nothing but a common car these two years at least, except the Marquis of Anglesea and suite, *and* his Excellency was on horseback." As for such a carriage as Sir Culling's, the like, as men and boys at the door told us, had never been seen in these parts.

Sir Culling stood a little daunted. We inquired—I particularly, how far it was to Ballinahinch Castle, where the Martins live, and which I knew was some miles on this side of Clifden. I went into Corrib Lodge and wrote with ink on a visiting ticket with "Miss Edgeworth" on it, my compliments, and Sir Culling and Lady Smith's, a petition for a night's hospitality, to use in case of our utmost need.

The Scotchman could not describe exactly how many *bad steps* there were, but he forewarned us that they were bad enough, and as he sometimes changed the words *bad steps* into *sloughs*, our Galway postillions looked graver and graver, hoped they should get their horses over, but did not know; they had never been this road, never farther than Outerard, but they would do all that men and beasts could do.

The first bad step we came to was indeed a slough, but

only a couple of yards wide across the road. The horses, the moment they set their feet upon it, sank up to their knees, and were whipped and spurred, and they struggled and floundered, and the carriage, as we inside passengers felt, sank and sank. Sir Culling was very brave and got down to help. The postillions leaped off, and bridles in hand gained the *shore*, and by dint of tugging, and whipping, and hallooing, and dragging of men and boys, who followed from Corrib Lodge, we were got out and were on the other side.

Farther on we might fare worse from what we could learn, so in some commotion we got out and said we would rather walk. And when we came to the next bad step, the horses, seeing it was a slough like the first, put back their ears and absolutely refused to set foot upon it, and they were, the postillions agreed, quite right; so they were taken off and left to look on, while by force of arms the carriage was to be got over by men and boys, who shouting, gathered from all sides, from mountain paths down which they poured, and from fields where they had been at work or loitering; at the sight of the strangers they flocked to help—such a carriage had never been seen before—to help common cars, or jaunting cars over these bad steps they had been used. "This heavy carriage! sure it was impossible, but sure they might do it." And they talked and screamed together in English and Irish equally unintelligible to us, and in spite of all remonstrance about breaking the pole—pole, and wheels, and axle, and body, they seized of the carriage, and standing and jumping from stone to stone, or any tuft of bog that could bear them, as their practised eyes saw; they, I cannot tell you how, dragged, pushed, and *screamed* the carriage over. And Sir Culling got over his way, and Lady Smith would not

be carried, but leaping and assisted by men's arms and shouts, she got to the other side. And a great giant, of the name of Ulick Burke, took me up in his arms as he might a child or a doll, and proceeded to carry me over—while I, exceedingly frightened and exceedingly civil, and (as even in the moment of most danger I could not help thinking and laughing within me at the thought) very like Rory in his dream on the eagle's back, in his journey to the moon, I kept alternately flattering my giant, and praying—"Sir, sir, pray set me down; do let me down now, sir, pray."

"Be asy; be *quite*, can't you, dear, and I'll carry you over to the other side safely, all in good time," floundering as he went.

"Thank you, sir, thank you. Now, sir, now set me down, if you will be so very good, on the bank."

Just as we reached the bank he stumbled and sank knee-deep, but threw me, as he would a sack, to shore, and the moment I felt myself on *terra firma*, I got up and ran off, and never looked back, trusting that my giant knew his own business; and so he did, and all dirt and bog water, was beside me again in a trice. "Did not I carry you over well, my lady? Oh, it's I am used to it, and helped the Lord Anglesea when he was in it."

So as we walked on, while the horses were coming over, I don't know how, Ulick and a tribe of wild Connemara men and boys followed us, all talking at once, and telling us there were twenty or thirty such bad steps, one worse than another, farther and farther on. It was clear that we could not walk all the twelve miles, and the men and Sir Culling assuring us that they would get us safe over, and that we had better get into the carriage again, and in short that we *must* get in, we submitted.

I confess, Pakenham, I was frightened nearly out of

my wits. At the next trial Lady Culling Smith was wonderfully brave, and laughed when the carriage was hauled from side to side, so nearly upset, that how each time it escaped I could not tell; but at last, when down it sank, and all the men shouted and screamed, her courage fell, and she confessed afterwards she thought it was all over with us, and that we should never be got out of this bog-hole. Yet out we were got; but how? what with the noise, and what with the fright, far be it from me to tell you. But I know I was very angry with a boy for laughing in the midst of it: a little dare-devil of a fellow, as my giant Ulick called him; I could with pleasure have seen him ducked in bog water! but forgot my anger in the pleasure of safe landing, and now I vowed I could and would walk the whole ten miles farther, and would a thousand times rather.

My scattered senses and common sense returning, it now occurred to me that it would be desirable to avail myself of the card I had in my bag, and beg a night's lodging at our utmost need. It was still broad daylight, to be sure, and Sir Culling still hoped we should get on to Clifden before dark. But I did request he would despatch one of these gossoons to Ballinahinch Castle with my card immediately. It could do no harm I argued, and Lady Smith seconded me with, "Yes, dear Culling, *do*," and my dear giant Ulick backed me with, "Troth, you're right enough, ma'am. Troth, sir, it will be dark enough soon, and long enough before you're clean over them sloughs, farthest on beyant where we can engage to see you over. Sure, here's my own boy will run with the speed of light with the lady's card."

I put it into his hand with the promise of half a crown, and how he did take to his heels!

We walked on, and Ulick, who was a professional wit as well as a giant, told us the long-ago tale of Lord Anglesea's visit to Connemara, and how as he walked beside his horse this gentleman-lord, as he was, had axed him which of his legs he liked best.

Now Ulick knew right well that one was a cork leg, but he never let on, as he told us, and pretended the one leg was just the same as t'other, and he saw no differ in life, "which pleased my lord-liftenant greatly, and then his lordship fell to explaining to me why it was cork, and how he lost it in battle, which I knew before as well as he did, for I had larned all about it from our Mr. Martin, who was expecting him at the castle, but still I never let on, and handled the legs one side of the horse and t'other and asy found out, and tould him, touching the cork, 'sure this is the more *honourable*.'"

Which observation surely deserved, and I hope obtained half a crown. Our way thus beguiled by Ulick's Irish wit, we did not for some time feel that we could not walk for ever. Lady Culling Smith complained of being stiff and tired, and we were compelled to the carriage again, and presently heavy dews of evening falling, we were advised to let down those fairy-board shutters I described to you, which was done with care and cost of nails. I did it at last, and oh! how I wished it up again when we were boxed up, and caged in without the power of seeing more than glimpses of our danger—glimpses heightening imagination, and, if we were to be overturned, all this glass to be broken into our eyes and ears.

Well! well! I will not wear your sympathy and patience eighteen times out, with the history of the eighteen sloughs we went, or were got, through at the imminent peril of our lives. Why the carriage was not broken to pieces I cannot

tell, but an excellent strong carriage it was, thank Heaven, and the builder whoever he was.

I should have observed to you that while we yet could look about us, we had continually seen, to increase our sense of vexation, Nimmo's new road looking like a gravel walk running often parallel to our path of danger, and yet for want of being finished there it was, useless and most tantalising.

Before it grew quite dark, Sir Culling tapped at our dungeon window, and bid us look out at a beautiful place, a paradise in the wilds. "Look out? How?"—"Open the little window at your ear, and this just before you—push the bolt back."—"But I can't."

With the help of an ivory cutter lever, however, I did accomplish it, and saw indeed a beautiful place belonging, our giant guide told us, to Dean Mahon, well wooded and most striking in this desert.

It grew dark, and Sir Culling, very brave, walking beside the carriage, when we came to the next bad step, sank above his knees; how they dragged him out I could not see, and there were we in the carriage stuck fast in a slough, which, we were told, was the last but one before Ballinahinch Castle, when my eyes were blessed with a twinkling light in the distance—a boy with a lantern. And when, breathless, he panted up to the side of the carriage and thrust up lantern and note (we still in the slough), how glad I was to see him and it! and to hear him say, "Then Mr. Martin's very unaasy about yees—so he is."

"I am very glad of it—very glad indeed," said I. The note in a nice lady's hand from Mrs. Martin greeted us with the assurance that Miss Edgeworth and her English friends should be welcome at Ballinahinch Castle.

Then from our mob another shout! another heave!

another drag, and another lift by the spokes of the wheels. Oh! if they had broken!——but they did not, and we were absolutely out of this slough. I spare you the next and last, and then we wound round the *Lake-road* in the dark, on the edge of Ballinahinch lake on Mr. Martin's new road, as our dear giant told us, and I thought we should never get to the house, but at last we saw a chimney on fire, at least myriads of sparks and spouts of flame, but before we reached it, it abated, and we came to the door without seeing what manner of house or castle it might be, till the hall door opened and a butler—half an angel he appeared to us—appeared at the door. But then in the midst of our impatience I was to let down and buckle up these fairy boards—at last swinging and slipping it was accomplished, and out we got, but with my foot still on the step we all called out to tell the butler we were afraid some chimney was on fire. Without deigning even to look up at the chimney, he smiled and motioned us the way we should go. He was as we saw at first view, and found afterwards, the most imperturbable of men.

And now that we are safely housed, and housed in a castle too, I will leave you, my dear Pakenham, for the present.

March 12.

What became of the chimney on fire, I cannot tell—the Imperturbable was probably right in never minding it; he was used to its ways of burning out, and being no more thought of.

He showed us into a drawing-room, where we saw by firelight a lady alone—Mrs. Martin, tall and thin, in deep mourning. Though by that light, but dimly visible, and by our eyes *dazed* as they were just coming out of the dark, but imperfectly seen, yet we could not doubt at first sight

that she was a lady in the highest sense of the word, perfectly a gentlewoman. And her whole manner of receiving us, and the ease of her motions, and of her conversation, in a few moments convinced me that she must at some time of her life have been accustomed to live in the best society—the best society in Ireland; for it was evident from her accent that she was a *native*—high-life Dublin tone of about forty years ago. The curls on her forehead, mixed with gray, prematurely gray, like your mother's, much older than the rest of her person.

She put us at ease at once, by beginning to talk to us, as if she was well acquainted with my family—and so she was from William, who had prepossessed her in our favour, yet she did not then allude to him, though I could not but understand what she meant to convey—I liked her.

Then came in, still by firelight, from a door at the farther end of the room, a young lady, elegantly dressed in deep mourning. "My daughter—Lady Culling Smith—Miss Edgeworth:" slight figure, head held up and thrown back. She had the resolution to come to the very middle of the room and make a deliberate and profound curtsey, which a dancing-master of Paris would have approved; seated herself upon the sofa, and seemed as if she never intended to speak. Mrs. Martin showed us up to our rooms, begging us not to dress unless we liked it before dinner; and we did not like it, for we were very much tired, and it was now between eight and nine o'clock. Bedchambers spacious. Dinner, we were told, was ready whenever we pleased, and, well pleased, down we went: found Mr. Martin in the drawing-room—a large Connemara gentleman, white, massive face; a stoop forward in his neck, the consequence of a shot in the Peninsular War.

"Well! will you come to dinner? dinner's ready.

Lady Culling Smith, take my arm; Sir Culling, Miss Edgeworth."

A fine large dining-room, and standing at the end of the table an odd-looking person, below the middle height, youngish, but the top and back of his head perfectly bald, like a bird's skull, and at each temple a thick bunch of carroty red curly hair, thick red whiskers and light blue eyes, very fair skin and carnation colour. He wore a long green coat, and some abominable coloured thing round his throat, and a look as if he could not look at you, and would. I wondered what was to become of this man, and he looked as if he wondered too. But Mr. Martin, turning abruptly, said, "M'Hugh! where are you, man? M'Hugh, sit down man, here!"

And M'Hugh sat down. I afterwards found he was an essential person in the family: M'Hugh here, M'Hugh there; very active, acute, and ready, and bashful, a dare-devil kind of man, that would ride, and boat, and shoot in any weather, and would at any moment hazard his life to save a fellow-creature's. Miss Martin sat opposite to me, and with the light of branches of wax candles full upon her, I saw that she was very young, about seventeen, very fair, hair which might be called red by rivals and auburn by friends, her eyes blue-gray, prominent, like pictures I have seen by Leonardo da Vinci.

But Miss Martin must not make me forget the dinner, and such a dinner! London *bon vivants* might have blessed themselves! Venison such as Sir Culling declared could not be found in England, except from one or two immense parks of noblemen favoured above their peers; salmon, lobsters, oysters, game, all well cooked and well served, and well placed upon the table: nothing loaded, all *in* good taste, as well as *to* the taste; wines, such as I was not

worthy of, but Sir Culling knew how to praise them; champagne, and all manner of French wines.

In spite of a very windy night, I slept admirably well, and wakened with great curiosity to see what manner of place we were in. From the front windows of my room, which was over the drawing-room, I looked down a sudden slope to the only trees that could be seen, far or near, and only on the tops of them. From the side window a magnificent but desolate prospect of an immense lake and bare mountains.

When I went down, and to the hall door at which we had entered the night before, I was surprised to see neither mountains, lake, nor river—all flat as a pancake—a wild, boundless sort of common, with showers of stones; no avenue or regular approach, no human habitation within view: and when I walked up the road and turned to look at the castle, nothing could be less like a castle. From the drawing I send you (who it was done by I will tell you by and by), you would imagine it a real castle, bosomed high in trees. Such flatterers as those portrait-painters of places are! And yet it is all true enough, if you see it from the right point of view. Much I wished to see more of the inhabitants of this castle, but we were to pursue our way to Clifden this day; and with these thoughts balancing in my mind of *wish* to stay, and *ought* to go, I went to breakfast—coffee, tea, hot rolls, ham, all luxuries.

Isabella did not make her appearance, but this I accounted for by her having been much tired. She had complained of rheumatic pains, but I had thought no more about them. Little was I aware of all that was to be. "L'homme propose: Dieu dispose." Lady Culling Smith at last appeared, hobbling, looking in torture, leaning on her husband's arm, and trying to smile on our hospitable

hosts, all standing up to receive her. Never did I see a human creature in the course of one night so changed. When she was to sit down, it was impossible: she could not bend her knees, and fell back in Sir Culling's arms. He was excessively frightened. His large powerful host carried her upstairs, and she was put to bed by her thin, scared-looking, but excellent and helpful maid; and this was the beginning of an illness which lasted above three weeks. Little did we think, however, at the beginning how bad it would be. We thought it only rheumatism, and I wrote to Honora that we should be detained a few days longer—from day to day put off. Lady Culling Smith grew alarmingly ill. There was only one half-fledged doctor at Clifden: the Martins disliked him, but he was sent for, and a puppy he proved, thinking of nothing but his own shirt-buttons and fine curled hair. Isabella grew worse and worse — fainting-fits; and Mrs. and Miss Martin, both accustomed to prescribe for the country-people in want of all medical advice in these lone regions, went to their pharmacopœias and medicine-chest, and prescribed various strong remedies, and ran up and down stairs, but could not settle what the patient's disease was, whether gout or rheumatism; and these required quite different treatment: hands and lips were swelled and inflamed, but not enough to say it was positively gout, then there was fear of drawing the gout to the stomach, and if it was not gout!—All was terror and confusion; and poor Sir Culling, excessively fond of Isabella, stood in tears beside her bed. He had sat up two nights with her, and was now seized with asthmatic spasms himself in his chest. It was one of the worst nights you can imagine, blowing a storm and raining cats and dogs. Mr. and Mrs. Martin and Sir Culling thought Lady Smith so dangerously ill that it was necessary

to send a man on horseback thirty miles to Outerard for a physician: and who could be sent such a night? one of the Galway postillions on one of the post-horses (you will understand that we were obliged to keep these horses and postillions at Ballinahinch, as no other horses could be procured). The postillion was to be *knocked up*, and Sir Culling and Mr. Martin went to some den to waken him.

Meanwhile I was standing alone, very sorrowful, on the hearth in the great drawing-room, waiting to hear how it could be managed, when in came Mr. M'Hugh, and coming quite close up to me, said, "Them Galway boys will not know the way across the bogs as I should: I'd be at Outerard in half the time. I'll go, if they'll let me, and with all the pleasure in life."

"Such a night as this! Oh no, Mr. M'Hugh!"

"Oh yes; why not?" said he. And this good-hearted, wild creature would have gone that instant, if we would have let him!

However, we would not, and he gave instructions to the Galway boy how to keep clear of the sloughs and bog-holes; observing to me that "them stranger horses are good for little in Connemara—nothing like a Connemara pony for that!" As Ulick Burke said, "The ponies are such knowing little creatures, when they come to a slough they know they'd sink in, and their legs of no use to them, they lie down till the men that can stand drag them over with their legs kneeling under them."

The Galway boy got safe to Outerard, and next morning brought back Dr. Davis, a very clever, agreeable man, who had had a great deal of experience, having begun life as an army surgeon: at any rate, he was not thinking of himself, but of his patient. He thought Isabella dangerously ill—unsettled gout. I will not tire you with

all the history of her illness, and all our terrors; but never would I have left home on this odd journey if I could have foreseen this illness. I cannot give you an idea of my loneliness of feeling, my utter helplessness, from the impossibility of having the advantage of the sympathy and sense of any of my own family. We had not, for one whole week, the comfort of even any one letter from any of our distant friends. We had expected to be by this time at Castlebar, and we had desired Honora to direct our letters there. Sir Culling with great spirit sent a Connemara messenger fifty miles to Castlebar for the letters, and when he came back he brought but one!

No mail-coach road comes near here: no man on horseback could undertake to carry the letters regularly. They are carried three times a week from Outerard to Clifden, thirty-six miles, by three gossoons, or more properly bog-trotters, and very hard work it is for them. One runs a day and a night, and then sleeps a day and a night, and then another takes his turn; and each of these boys has £15 a year. I remember seeing one of these postboys leaving Ballinahinch Castle, with his leather bag on his back, across the heath and across the bog, leaping every now and then, and running so fast! his bare, white legs thrown up among the brown heath. These postboys were persons of the greatest consequence to us: they brought us news from home, and to poor Lady Culling Smith accounts of her baby, and of her friends in England. We began to think we should never see any of them again.

I cannot with sufficient gratitude describe to you the hospitality and unvaried kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Martin during all these trials. Mr. Martin, rough man as he seemed outside, was all soft and tender within, and so very considerate for the English servants. Mrs. Martin

told me that he said to her, "I am afraid that English man and maid must be very uncomfortable here—so many things to which they have been used, which we have not for them! Now we have no beer, you know, my dear, and English servants are always used to beer." So Mr. Martin gave them cider instead, and every day he took to each of them himself a glass of excellent port wine; and to Isabella, as gout-cordial, he gave Bronte, the finest, Sir Culling said, he ever tasted. And never all the time did Mr. and Mrs. Martin omit anything it was in their power to do to make us comfortable, and to relieve us from the dreadful feeling of being burthensome and horrible intruders! They did succeed in putting me completely at ease, as far as they were concerned. I do not think I could have got through all the anxiety I felt during Lady Culling Smith's illness, and away from all my own people, and waiting so shockingly long for letters, if it had not been for the kindness of Mrs. Martin, and the great fondness I soon felt for her. She is not literary; she is very religious—what would be called VERY GOOD, and yet she suited me, and I grew very fond of her, and she of me. Little things that I could feel better than describe inclined me to her, and our minds were open to one another from the first day. Once, towards the end, I believe, of the first week, when I began some sentence with an apology for some liberty I was taking, she put her hand upon my arm, and with a kind, reproachful look exclaimed, "Liberty! I thought we were past that long since: are not we?"

She told me that she had actually been brought up with a feeling of reverence for my father, and particularly for me, by a near relation of hers, old Mr. Kirwan, the President of the Royal Irish Academy, who was a great

friend of my father's and puffer of me in early days. Then her acquaintance afterwards with Mr. Nimmo carried on the connection. She told me he showed her that copy of *Harry and Lucy* which you had in making the index, and showed her the bridge which he helped me over when Harry was building it. But what touched and won me first and most in Mrs. Martin was the manner in which she spoke of William—her true feeling for his character. "Whenever he could get me alone," she said, "he would talk to me of Honora or Mrs. Edgeworth and his aunt Mary and you."

Some of the expressions she repeated I could not but feel sure were his, and they were so affectionate towards me, I was much touched. *Too besides* Mrs. Martin made herself very agreeable by her quantity of anecdotes, and her knowledge of the people with whom she had lived in her youth, of whom she could, with great ability and admirable composed drollery, give the most characteristic traits.

Miss Martin—though few books beyond an *Edinburgh* or *Quarterly Review* or two appeared in the sitting-room—has books in quantities in a closet in her own room, which is within her mother's; and "every morning," said Mrs. Martin, "she comes in to me while I am dressing, and pours out upon me an inundation of learning, fresh and fresh, all she has been reading for hours before I am up. Mary has read prodigiously."

I found Mary one of the most extraordinary persons I ever saw. Her acquirements are indeed prodigious: she has more knowledge of books, both scientific and learned, than any female creature I ever saw or heard of at her age—heraldry, metaphysics, painting and painters' lives, and tactics; she had a course of fortification from a French officer, and of engineering from Mr. Nimmo. She

understands Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and I don't know how many modern languages. French she speaks perfectly, learned from the French officer who taught her fortification, M. Du Bois, who was one of Buonaparte's legion of honour, and when the Emperor was *ousted*, fled from France, and earned his bread at Ballinahinch by teaching French, which Miss Martin talks as if she had been a native, but not as if she had been in good Parisian society; with an odd mixture of a *ton de garnison* which might be expected from a pupil of one of Buonaparte's officers. She imbibed from him such an admiration, such an enthusiasm for Buonaparte, that she cannot bear a word said to his disparagement; and when Sir Culling sometimes offended in that way, Miss Martin's face and neck grew carnation colour, and down to the tips of her fingers she blushed with indignation.

Her father the while smiled and winked at me. The father as well as the mother dote upon her; and he has a softened way of always calling her "my child" that interested me for both. "My child, never mind; what signifies about Buonaparte?"

One morning we went with Miss Martin to see the fine green Connemara marble-quarries. Several of the common people gathered round while we were looking at the huge blocks: these people Miss Martin called her TAIL. Sir Culling wished to obtain an answer to a question from some of these people, which he desired Miss Martin to ask for him, being conscious that, in his English tone, it would be unintelligible. When the question had been put and answered, Sir Culling objected: "But, Miss Martin, you did not put the question exactly as I requested you to state it."

"No," said she, with colour raised and head thrown

back, "No, because I knew how to put it so that people could understand it. *Je sais mon métier de reine.*"

This trait gives you an idea of her character and manner, and of the astonishment of Sir Culling at her want of sympathy with his really liberal and philanthropic views for Ireland, while she is full of her tail, her father's fifty-miles-long avenue, and Æschylus and Euripides, in which she is admirably well read. Do think of a girl of seventeen, in the wilds of Connemara, intimately acquainted with all the beauties of Æschylus and Euripides, and having them as part of her daily thoughts!

There are immense caves on this coast which were the *free-traders'* resort, and would have been worth any money to Sir Walter. "Quite a scene and a country for him," as Miss Martin one day observed to me; "don't you think your friend Sir Walter Scott would have liked our people and our country?"

It is not exactly a feudal state, but the *tail* of a feudal state. Dick Martin, father of the present man, was not only lord of all he surveyed, but lord of all the lives of the people: now the laws of the land have come in, and rival proprietors have sprung up in rival castles. Hundreds would still, I am sure, start out of their bogs for Mr. Martin, but he is called *Mister*, and the prestige is over. The people in Connemara were all very quiet and submissive till some *refugee Terry-alts* took asylum in these bog and mountain fastnesses. They spread their principles, and soon the clan combined against their chief, and formed a plan of seizing Ballinahinch Castle, and driving him and all the Protestant gentry out of the country. Mr. Martin is a man of desperate courage, some skill as an officer, and *prodigious* bodily strength, which altogether stood him in stead in time of great danger. I cannot tell you the whole long

story, but I will mention one anecdote which will show you how like the stories in Walter Scott are the scenes that have been lately passing in Connemara. Mr. Martin summoned one of his own followers, who had he knew joined the Terry-alts, to give up a gun lent to him in days of trust and favour: no answer to the summons. A second, a third summons: no effect. Mr. Martin then warned the man that if he did not produce the gun at the next sessions he would come and seize it. The man appeared at the house where Mr. Martin holds his sessions—about the size of Lovell's schoolroom, and always fuller than it can hold: Mr. Martin espied from his end of the room his friend with the gun, a powerfully strong man, who held his way on, and stood full before him.

"You sent for my gun, your honour, did you?"

"I did—three times; it is well you have brought it at last; give it to me."

The man kneeled down on one knee, and putting the gun across the other knee, broke it asunder, and throwing the pieces to Mr. Martin, cried, "There it is for you. I swore that was the only way you should ever have it, dead or alive. You have warned me, and now I warn you; take care of yourself."

He strode out of the crowd. But he was afterwards convicted of Terry-alt practices and transported. Now all is perfectly quiet, and Mr. Martin goes on doing justice in his own peculiar fashion every week. When the noise, heat, and crowd in his sessions court become beyond all bearing, he roars with his stentorian voice to clear the court; and if that be not done forthwith, he with his own two Herculean arms seizes the loudest two disputants, knocks their heads together, thrusts them bawling as they go out of the door and flings them asunder.

In his own house there never was a more gentle, hospitable, good-natured man, I must say again and again, or else I should be a very ungrateful woman.

Miss Martin has three ponies, which she has brought every day to the great Wyatt window of the library, where she feeds them with potatoes. One of them is very passionate; and once the potato being withheld a moment too long at the hall door he fell into a rage, pushed in at the door after her, and she ran for her life, got upstairs and was safe.

I asked what he would have done if he had come up to her?

"Set his two feet on my shoulders, thrown me down, and trampled upon me."

The other day the smith hurt his foot in shoeing him, and up he reared, and up jumped the smith on the raised part of his forge—the pony jumped after him, and if the smith had not scrambled behind his bellows, "would have killed him to be sure."

After hearing this I declined riding this pony, though Miss Martin pressed me much, and assured me he was as quiet as a lamb—provided I would never strike him or look cross. Once she got me up on his back, but I looked so miserable, she took me down again. She described to me her nursing of one of these ponies; "he used to stand with his head over my shoulder while I rubbed his nose for an hour together; but I suppose I must throw off these Bedouin habits before I go to London."

They are now spending the season in town. I had an opportunity of seeing her perfect freedom from coquetry in company with a Mr. Smith—no relation of Sir Culling's—a very handsome fine gentleman who came here unexpectedly.

All this time poor Isabella has been left by me in torture

in her bed. At the end of three weeks she was pronounced out of danger, and in spite of the kind remonstrances of our hospitable hosts, not tired of the sick or the well, on a very wet odious day away we went. As there are no inns or place where an invalid could pass the night, I wrote to beg a night's lodging at Renvyle, Mr. Blake's. He and Mrs. Blake, who wrote *Letters from the Irish Highlands*, were not at home, in Galway on a visit, but they answered most politely that they begged me to consider their house as my own, and wrote to their agent who was at Renvyle to receive us.

Captain Bushby, of the Water Guard—married to a niece of Joanna Baillie's—was very kind in accompanying us on our first day's journey. "I must see you *safe out*," said he. "Safe out" is the common elision for safe out of Connemara. And really it was no easy matter to get us safe out; but I spare you a repetition of sloughs; we safely reached Renvyle, where the agent received us in a most comfortable well-furnished, well-carpeted, well-lighted library, filled with books—excellent dining-room beyond, and here Lady Smith had a day's rest, without which she could not have proceeded, and well for her she had such a comfortable resting-place.

Next day we got into *Joyce's Country*, and had hot potatoes and cold milk, and Renvyle cold fowl at The Lodge, as it is styled, of Big Jacky Joyce—one of the descendants of the ancient proprietors, and quite an original Irish character. He had heard my name often, he said, from Mr. Nimmo, and knew I was a writing lady, and a friend to Ireland, and he was civil to me, and I was civil to him, and after eyeing Sir Culling and Lady Smith, and thinking, I saw, that she was affecting to be languishing, and then perceiving that she was really weak and ill, he became

cordial to the whole party, and entertained us for two hours, which we were obliged to wait for the going out of the tide before we could cross the sands. Here was an arm of the sea, across which Mr. Nimmo had been employed to build a bridge, and against Big Jack Joyce's advice, he would build it where Jack prophesied it would be swept away in the winter, and twice the bridge was built, and twice it was swept away, and still Nimmo said it was the fault of the masons; the embankment and his theory could not be wrong, and a third time he built the bridge, and there we saw the ruins of it on the sands—all the embankments swept away and all we had for it was to be dragged over the sand by men—the horses taken off. We were pushed down into a gully-hole five feet deep, and thence pulled up again; how it was I cannot tell you, for I shut my eyes and resigned myself, gave up my soul and was much surprised to find it in my body at the end of the operation: Big Jacky Joyce and his merry men having somehow managed it.

There was an end of our perils by gullies, sloughs, and bog-holes. We now got on Mr. Nimmo's and Mr. Killalla's really good roads, and now our four horses began to tell, and that night we reached Westport, and in consequence of Mrs. Martin's introduction to her friend Lord Sligo were received by him and Lady Sligo most courteously.

Westport is a beautiful place, with a town, a port, industrious people all happy, and made so by the sense and energy of a good landlord and a good agent. We regretted that we could stay only this night and the next morning to breakfast; it was so delightful and extraordinary to us again to see trees and shrubberies, and to find ourselves again in the midst of flowers from greenhouse and conservatory. Isabella said she was so delighted,

she could hardly forbear, with her crippled, gouty hands, embracing every tree she met. Lord Sligo, himself a martyr to the gout, and with a son at Eton just then attacked with gout, had great compassion for her: he and all his family high-bred and cordial.

The next morning we pursued our journey, and at the next stage came upon a real mail-coach road, where we had post-horses again, and dismissed our Galway horses. This night brought us to Lough Glyn, where Mr. Strickland received us very kindly, and we had the joy of finding letters waiting for us from home; but we found that the cholera had been for the last ten days killing the poor people at Edgeworthstown—Condy Keegan's son-in-law, M'Glaughlin the carpenter, and a great many more. How dreadfully anxious Honora must have been with the charge of baby, and this cholera close to our gates!

The last day's journey was the longest of all, from the suspense, though all was smooth upon the road. When we saw the lights in the windows at home, you may guess how our hearts went pit-a-pat. We found all WELL; and glad we all were to meet again, and to have Isabella safe with her child: not in her arms, poor crippled creature—it was not possible for her to hold the infant; she could but just hobble about, and was a quarter of an hour going upstairs. Aunt Mary and Honora, after all the warnings my letters had given, were surprised and shocked at the first sight of her. For ten days after her arrival she was unable to travel, impatient as they both were to be at home again. They did reach it, baby and all, safely at last, and you may imagine how relieved we were when we heard of her being safe with her own family again, and with London physicians: five

months since then and she is not yet quite re-established. We feel now how very serious her illness was.

But now that it is all over, and I can balance pains and pleasures, I declare that, upon the whole, I had more pleasure than pain from this journey; the perils of the road were far overbalanced by the diversion of seeing the people, and the seeing so many to me perfectly new characters and modes of living. The anxiety of Isabella's illness, terrible as it was, and the fear of being ill myself and a burthen upon their hands, and even the horrid sense of remoteness and impossibility of communication with my own friends, were altogether overbalanced by the extraordinary kindness, and tenderness, and generous hospitality of the Martins. It will do my heart good all the days of my life to have experienced such kindness, and to have seen so much good in human nature as I saw with them—red M'Hugh included. I am sure I have a friend in Mrs. Martin: it is an extraordinary odd feeling to have made a friend at sixty-six years of age! You, my dear young Pakenham, can't understand this; but you will live, I hope, to understand it, and perhaps to say, "Now I begin to comprehend what Maria, poor old soul! meant by that *odd* feeling at the end of her Connemara journey."

When we were regretting to Lord Sligo that we had missed seeing so many persons and places on our tour whom we had at first setting out made it our object to see—Clifden, the Barony of Erris, and the wonderful Major Bingham—Lord Sligo comforted us by saying, "Depend upon it, you have seen more really of Connemara than any strangers who have ever travelled through it, exactly because you remained in one place and in one family, where you had time to see the habits

of the people, and to see them nearly and familiarly, and without their being shown off, or thinking of showing themselves off to you."

March 29.

I have been so busy at rents and odious accounts, that I have never been able to go on to you. Your mother returned home a few days ago, after seven months' absence! You may guess how happy we were to have her again, and how we have been talking and hearing. Lucy bore the parting with her wonderfully well; indeed, she was anxious that her mother should return to us.

Young Walter—now Sir Walter—Scott has been quartered at Longford, and is now going to Dublin: he dined here on Saturday, and was just the same as when we saw him in 1825. Sophy and her three children round her must have surprised him not a little.[1] It is a pity Maxwell was not in the group. Little fair-haired Willy, nothing daunted by the nearly seven-feet-high major in full uniform, marched up to him and patted his knee, and in return the major patted his head. His soft Scotch voice, and often the kind and playful turns in his conversation, reminded me both pleasurably and painfully of his father. Sophy wished that her children should hear the band of the regiment, and he promised that he would halt at Tuite's gate, as a *select* party with the band were to go by Castle Pollard; and this morning, when I opened my eyes, I saw it was snowing so bitterly, I gave up all hopes of our being able to take the children to hear the band; but between seven, when I wakened, and half after nine, the appointed hour, many changes

[1] Mrs. Fox, as Sophy Edgeworth, had been with her sister at Abbotsford in 1823.

of the sky took place, and at the right moment the sun shone out, the clouds blew over the beech-trees, and Sophy was drawn in Willy Waller's little carriage, with him in her lap; Honora, Mary Anne, Charlotte, and I accompanying. We had to wait some time, and went into what you would call Tuite's house, but it is now Jem Newman's; and there was his nice little wife, with her mouth full of the last potato she had eaten for breakfast; and she put away the half-full potato basket, and the boy with his can of milk retreated from the stool by the fire, and she welcomed us with Irish heart's welcome in lip and eye; and the children were delighted watching the pig and the chickens feeding at the door.

At last the music was heard, and very pretty it was, and mother and children were happy; and Sir Walter stopped on his fine gray horse, and said, "You see, I have kept my word," and then galloped off. A sergeant then came up to me with a slip of paper in his hand, saying, "Can you read *write?*" I said, I believed I could, and made out for him the route to Castle Pollard: the sound of the music died away, and we returned to breakfast. "Sire, il n'y a de circonstance où on ne prend pas de déjeuner," as the man said to Buonaparte.

You will have seen in the newspapers the court-martial about Lord Brudenell and the 15th Hussars: Lord Forbes, in giving me an account of the matter, said, "Walter Scott, by his conduct, and the way in which he gave his testimony, covered himself with glory,"—told the truth like a man and a gentleman.

You may have also seen mentioned the murder of Captain Skyring, of the *Ætna*, of which Henry Beddoes was second lieutenant, off the coast of Africa. He wrote a few lines to Fanny after the catastrophe; happily for

him he was kept by some duty on board. It was imprudent of Captain Skyring to attempt to land, and take observations, without having his ship near enough to defend him. The natives, all with arms, came round him, and began by stealing everything they could lay their hands on. Captain Skyring drew a circle round his circle, forbidding the thieves to pass it; but they passed it, and one was seizing the instrument in his hand, when the captain fired and killed the man; and then they all fell upon him, stabbed him with their pikes and knives, stripped the body, and left it with seventeen wounds. Our people afterwards got it back. We know no more as yet, but that Captain Beaufort was extremely shocked and grieved.

I have no domestic occurrence to tell you, except that a robin, who for several seasons has frequented this house, and Lucy's room particularly, has this spring grown so familiar, that he began to build his nest in Lucy's old bonnet, laid a great heap of leaves in it, which we used to see him bringing in his bill, the leaves often as large as his body. Yesterday morning Betty the housemaid said to your mother, "Ma'am, when I opened the hall door this morning, the robin flew in over my head, and knowing his way wherever he wanted to go through the doors, just as if he was master of the house, ma'am! And he sits down before a door, and *looks* to have it opened for him." Dear little, impudent fellow! This packet concludes my chronicle of Connemara.

To C. S. EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *March* 14, 1834.

Having now done with business I may turn to a little pleasure; a great deal you have given me, my dear Sneyd,

by your friend Mr. Smedley's approbation of *Helen*. His polite playful allusion to the names of the horses, which names at this moment I forget, reminds me of a similar touch of the Duchess of Wellington in describing one of the Duke's battles, she quoted from the *Knapsack*, "Let the sugar basin be my master."

I have written to Fanny about Lady Charlotte Fitzgerald's death. I was very much shocked at it: I loved her; she was one of my earliest friends—"Leaf by leaf drops away."

To MISS RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *March* 22, 1834.

With all my heart I congratulate you on being in possession of your cottage.[1] Harriet Butler told us how happy the people of Black Castle and Navan were, when they heard you were coming to live amongst them again. You are now as busy as possible arranging your things and considering how all and each of your friends will like what you do, and I am—very conceited—sure that you often think of Maria among the number, and that you have even already thought of a footstool for her. Emmeline has, by the bye, invented and executed, and given to my mother, the most ingenious footstool I ever saw, which folds up and can be put into a work-bag. She has also sent the nicest most agreeable presents to the little Foxes—a kaleidoscope, a little watering-pot, and a pair of little tin scales with weights; they set about directly weighing everything that could be put into them, ending with sugar-plums and sugar-candy.

We have been much amused with *The Kuzzilbash* and by *Bubbles from the Brunnen*, by Captain Head.

[1] Dunmoe Cottage, at the end of the Black Castle demesne, about two miles from the house.

To MISS RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *July* 29, 1834.

I cannot, my dear Lady of Dunmoe, tell when I can be with you; go I will before autumn runs away with all your leaves, but I am afraid I must let autumn turn them of a sober hue, though I will not let it go to the sear and yellow. In plain prose I am tied down now by rents and business.

We have been dining at Mrs. Blackall's, and there met her pretty sister, Mrs. Johnstone, and very intelligent Captain Johnstone, a Berkshire man from near Hare Hatch, and had a very agreeable day, and much conversation on books and authors, and found that the *Diary of an Ennuyée* and *Female Characters of Shakespeare*, both very clever books, are by a lady who was governess to Mrs. Blackall and her sisters. Mrs. Rolle, her mother, read the *Diary of an Ennuyée*, and wondered when she saw "Mr. and Mrs. R.," and all the places and people they had seen abroad, till she came to the name of Laura, and some lines to her by which she discovered that the author must be their former governess, Miss Murphy, now married to a very clever lawyer.[1] All the woes and heart-breakings are mere fable in the *Diary*. Her last book, *Visits and Sketches at Home and Abroad*, I like; there is a great deal of thought and feeling in it.

Miss Edgeworth's *Helen* would never have been finished but for the encouragement shown by her sister Harriet, and her interest in the story. It is more of a "novel" than any of its predecessors, has more imagination, and its

[1] Mrs. Jameson.

interest centres more around one person. Its object is to show how many of the troubles of social life arise from want of absolute truthfulness. Its principle is depicted in the explanation of one of its characters: "I wish that the word *fib* was out of the English language, and *white lie* drummed after it. Things by their right names, and we should all do much better. Truth must be told, whether agreeable or not."

Helen was well received by the public, but Miss Edgeworth had great diffidence about it. To Dr. Holland she wrote:

I am very glad that you have been pleased with *Helen*—far above my expectations! and I thank you for that warmth of kindness with which you enter into all the details of the characters and plan of the story. Nothing but regard for the author could have made you give so much importance to my tale. It has always been my fault to let the moral I had in view appear too soon and too clearly, and I am not surprised that my old fault, notwithstanding some pains which I certainly *thought* I took to correct it, should still abide by me.

To MRS. STARK.[1]

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Sept.* 6, 1834.

Some of my friends, knowing the timidity, not to say cowardice, of my nature, have feared that I should be

[1] Who had sent Miss Edgeworth a long criticism from her cousin, Colonel Matthew Stewart (son of Dugald Stewart), on her *Helen*.

daunted by Colonel Stewart's most just observations upon the defects and deficiencies of my past manner and principles of novel-writing; but, on the contrary, I, who know myself better, feel that, *in spite* of my timidity, I am, instead of being daunted, encouraged by such criticism. Such a writer and such a noble mind as Colonel Stewart's having bestowed so much thought and time upon me and my fictions, raises both them and myself in my own opinion far more than could the largest "draught of unqualified praise"[1] from any common critic. From feeling that he does justice in many points to the past, I rely upon his prophecies as to the future, and I feel my ambition strongly excited by his belief that I CAN, and his prognostic that I shall do better hereafter. Boileau says, "Trust a critic who puts his finger at once upon what you know to be your infirm part." I had often thought and said to myself some of those things which Colonel Stewart has written, but never so strongly expressed, so fully brought home: my own rod of feathers did not do my business. I had often and often a suspicion that my manner was too Dutch, too minute; and very, very often, and warmly, admired the bold, grand style of the master hand and master genius. I *know* I feel how much *more is to be done, ought to be* done, by suggestion than by delineation, by creative fancy than by facsimile copying,—how much more by skilful selection and fresh and consistent combination—than can be effected by the most acute observation of individuals, or diligent accumulation of particulars.

But where I have erred or fallen short of what it is thought I might have done, it has not been from "drawing from the life, or from individuals, or from putting together

[1] Quoted from Mr. Croker, who said that nothing ever satisfied an author, but *large draughts of unqualified praise.*

actions or sayings noted in commonplace books from observation or hearsay in society." I have seldom or ever drawn any one character—certainly not any ridiculous or faulty character, from any individual. Wherever, in writing, a real character rose to my view, from memory or resemblance, it has always been hurtful to me, because, to avoid that resemblance, I was tempted by cowardice or compelled by conscience to throw in differences, which often ended in making my character inconsistent, unreal.

At the hazard of talking too much of myself, which people usually do when once they begin, I must tell my penetrating critic exactly the facts, as far as I know them, about my *habits of composition.* He will at least see, by my throwing open my mind thus, that he has not made me afraid of him, but has won my confidence, and made me look for his future sympathy and assistance. I have no "vast magazine of a commonplace book." In my whole life, since I began to write, which is now, I am concerned to state, upwards of forty years, I have had only about half a dozen little note-books, strangely and irregularly kept, sometimes with only words of reference to some book, or fact I could not bring accurately to mind. At first I was much urged by my father to note down remarkable traits of character or incidents, which he thought might be introduced in stories; and he often blamed that idleness or laziness, as he thought it in me, which resisted his urgency. But I was averse to noting down, because I was conscious that it did better for me to keep the things in my head, if they suited my purpose; and if they did not, they would only encumber me. I knew that, when I wrote down, I put the thing out of my care, out of my head; and that, though it might be put by very safe, I should not know where to look for it; that the labour of

looking over a note-book would never do when I was in the warmth and pleasure of inventing; that I should never recollect the facts or ideas at the right time, if I did not put them up in my own way in my own head: that is, if I felt with hope or pleasure "that thought or that fact will be useful to me in such a character or story, of which I have now a first idea, the same fact or thought would recur, I knew, when I wanted it, in right order for invention." In short, as Colonel Stewart guessed, the process of combination, generalisation, invention, was carried on always in my head best. Wherever I brought in *bodily* unaltered, as I have sometimes done, facts from real life, or sayings, or recorded observations of my own, I have almost always found them objected to by good critics as unsuited to the character, or in some way *de trop*. Sometimes, when the first idea of a character was taken from life from some ORIGINAL, and the characteristic facts noted down, or even noted only in my head, I have found it necessary entirely to alter these, not only from propriety, to avoid individual resemblance, but from the sense that the character would be only an EXCEPTION to general feeling and experience, not a rule. In short, exactly what Colonel Stewart says about "the conical hills" being the worst subjects for painters. As an instance I may mention King Corny, who is, I believe, considered more of a fancy piece, more as a *romantic* character than my usual common-life Dutch figures: the *first idea* of him was taken from the facts I heard of an oddity, a man, I believe, like no other, who lived in a remote part of Ireland, an ingenious despot in his own family, who blasted out of the rock on which his house was built half a kitchen, while he and family and guests were living in the house; who was so passionate, that children, grown-up sons, servants and all, ran out of

the house at once when he fell into a passion with his own tangled hair; a man who used, in his impatience and rages, to call at the head of the kitchen stairs to his servants, "Drop whatever you have in your hand, and come here and be d——d!" He was generous and kind-hearted, but despotic, and conceited to the most ludicrous degree: for instance, he thought he could work gobelin tapestry and play on the harp or mandolin better than any one living.

One after another, in working out King Corny, from the first wrong hint I was obliged to give up every fact, except that he propped up the roof of his house and built downwards, and to generalise all; to make him a man of expedients, of ingenious substitutes, such as any clever Irishman in middle life is used to. I was obliged to retain, but soften, the despotism, and exalt the generosity, to make it a character that would interest. Not one word I ever heard said by the living man, or had ever heard repeated of his saying, except "Drop what you have," etc., went into my King Corny's mouth—would not have suited him. I was obliged to make him according to the general standard of wit and acuteness, shrewd humour and sarcasm, of that class of *unread* natural geniuses, an overmatch for Sir Ulick, who is of a more cultivated class of acute and roguish Irish gentlemen. Colonel Stewart sees from this how far he has guessed rightly as to several points, but I think I have always aimed more at making my characters representatives of classes than he conceives. It is plain that I have not attained my aim.

I never could use notes in writing Dialogues; it would have been as impossible to me to get in the prepared good things at the right moment in the warmth of writing conversation, as it would be to lug them in in real con-

versation, perhaps more so—for I could not write dialogues at all without being at the time fully impressed with the characters, imagining myself each speaker, and that too fully engrosses the imagination to leave time for consulting note-books; the whole fairy vision would melt away, and the warmth and the pleasure of invention be gone. I might often, while writing, recollect from books or life what would suit, and often from note-book, but then I could not stop to look, and often quoted therefore inaccurately. I have a quick recollective memory and retentive for the sort of things I particularly want; they will recur to me at the moment I want them years and years after they have lain dormant, but alas! my memory is inaccurate, has hold of the object only by one side—the side or face that struck my imagination, and if I want more afterwards I do not know even where to look for it. I mention this because Dugald Stewart once was curious to know what sort of memory I had, whether recollective or retentive.

I understand what Colonel Stewart so admirably says about parable, apologue, and fables being general truths and morals which cannot be conveyed or depended upon equally when we come to modern novels, where Lady B. or Lord D. are not universal characters like Fox or Goose. I acknowledge that even a perfectly true character absolutely taken as a fac-simile from real life would not be interesting in a fiction, might not be believed, and could not be useful. The value of these odd characters depends, I acknowledge, upon their being actually known to be true. In history, extraordinary characters always interest us with all their inconsistencies, feeling we thus add to our actual knowledge of human nature. In fiction we have not this *conviction*, and therefore not this sort or

source of pleasure even if ever so well done; if it be quite a new inconsistency we feel doubtful and averse; but we submit when we know *it is* true: we say, "don't therefore tell me it is not in human nature."

I am not sure that I agree with Colonel Stewart about particular morals to stories, but this point might lead to long and intricate discussion.

I feel and admire all he says so eloquently, I am sure from his own heart, touching the advantage of raising the standard of our moral ambition; and the higher this standard can be raised by works of fiction the better. I feel and understand how many poets and novelists have raised in the mind that sort of enthusiasm which exalts and purifies the soul. Happy and gifted with heaven's best gift must be the poet, the inventor of any sort of fiction that can raise this enthusiasm. I recollect Mrs. Barbauld's lines describing—

> Generous youth that feeds
> On pictured tales of vast heroic deeds.

How I wish I could furnish, as Scott has, some of those pictured tales coloured to the life; but I fear I have not that power, therefore it is perhaps that I strive to console myself for my deficiencies by flattering myself that there is much, though not such glorious use, in my own lesser manner and department. The great virtues, the great vices excite strong enthusiasm, vehement horror, but after all it is not so necessary to warn the generality of mankind against these, either by precept or example, as against the lesser faults; we are all sufficiently aware that we must not break the commandments, and the reasons against all vices all feel even to the force of demonstration, but demonstration does not need and cannot receive additional force from

fiction. The Old Bailey trials, *Les Causes Célèbres*, come with more force, as with the force of actual truth, than can any of the finest fictions producing what Colonel Stewart calls "momentary belief in the reality of a fictitious character or event." Few readers do or can put themselves in the places of great criminals, or fear to yield to such and such temptations; they know that they cannot fall to the depth of evil at once, and they have no sympathy, no fear; their spirits are not "put in the act of falling." But show them the steep path, the little declivity at first, the step by step downwards, and they tremble. Show them the postern gates or little breaches in their citadel of virtue, and they fly to guard these; in short, show to them their own little faults which may lead on to the greatest, and they shudder; that is, if this be done with truth and brought home to their consciousness. This is all, which by reflection on my own mind and comparison with others and with records in books full as much as observations on living subjects, I feel or fancy I have sometimes done or can do.

But while I am thus *ladling* out praise to myself in this way, I do not flatter myself that I deserve the quantity of praise which Colonel Stewart gives me for laborious observation, or for steadiness and nicety of dissection. My father, to whose judgment I habitually refer to help out my own judgment of myself, and who certainly must from long acquaintance, to say no more, have known my character better than any other person can, always reproached me for trusting too much to my hasty glances, *aperçus*, as he called them, of character or truths; and often have I had, and have still (past my grand climacteric) to repent every day my mistaken conclusions and hasty jumps to conclusions. Perhaps you wish I should jump to conclusion now, and so I will.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

DUNMOE COTTAGE, *Nov.* 8, 1834.

I hope, my dear mother, that you have been wondering every day, and wondering *greatly* that you have never yet heard from Maria. I like that you should wonder and be provoked at not hearing from me, because when a letter comes it is opened with much more appetite than if you had not been kept famishing.

I have not told you how very nice and comfortable Sophy and Margaret Ruxton have made this cottage, and the situation is charming, and the view beautiful. I am reading Hannah More's *Letters*, and am entertained with them. I found at Black Castle four volumes of *Madame d'Abrantès*, which I had never read: the eleventh volume begins with her going to Portugal, and though half may be lies *well dressed*, yet almost all are entertaining.

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

DUNMOE COTTAGE, *Nov.* 28, 1834.

I have got the cushions, and am sitting on one of them, and Sophy and Margaret like them, and think how happy I am, though it is pouring rain, which affects my happiness very little, except for the boy's sake who is to carry this. I have some boy-anity.

> The glorious orb the day refines,
> The gossoon warms his shins and dines.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Jan.* 27, 1835.

We have been amusing ourselves with Lady Morgan's *Princess*, exceedingly amusing, both by its merits and its

absurdities,—that harlequin princess in her blouse is wonderfully clever and preposterous,—a Belgian Corinna. Mr. Butler has detected various errors in her historical remarks and allusions, but that it is excessively entertaining nobody can deny. The hero is like one of the seven sleepers not quite awakened, or how could he avoid finding out who this woman is who pursues him in so many forms? But we must grant a romance writer a few impossibilities.

Mrs. Edgeworth adds:

Maria was always so much interested in a story that she would not stop to reason upon it. I remember when Lady Morgan's *O'Donnell* was being read out in the year 1815, at the scene of M'Rory's appearance in the billiard room, when Mr. Edgeworth said, "This is quite improbable;" Maria exclaimed, "Never mind the improbability, let us go on with the entertainment."

MARIA *to* MRS. EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Jan.* 28, 1835.

The other night Harriet stood beside my bed before tea-time, and when I started up and said, "Tea is ready, I suppose," she told me that Mr. and Mrs. Danvers Butler and Miss Taylor were coming to tea. I thought it was a dream, but she explained,—they had come to Briggs's inn on their way to the County of Cavan, and could get no beds. Luckily we had two unoccupied rooms. Honora managed it all exceedingly well, and Barry took Mr. Danvers Butler in hand while he had dinner; the ladies preferred tea and coffee. They seemed much pleased by their reception. Mrs. Danvers Butler was a Miss Free-

mantle, and when I mentioned Lady Culling Smith and our Connemara adventures, she said she knew her very well and the Carrs, "all musical, highly accomplished, and such a united family." How oddly these little *feltings* of society go on in this way, working into one another little fibres of connection so strangely!

In the morning Briggs's four horses were put to their heavy chaise, and with main difficulty it was got through the yard and to the door, but not all the power of all the servants and four or five people besides could prevail upon these half-flayed-alive beasts to stir from the door—they would only *back*. So at last Barry was so kind as to send his man Philip with our black horses with them to Granard. We had as many thanks as well-bred people could give, and a cordial invitation to Leicestershire, if that could do us any good. Mr. Danvers Butler is handsome and gentleman-like, and she is charming: she had with her a favourite little Italian greyhound, with a collar of little gilt bells round her neck, which delighted the children, and she in return admired the children, Willy especially.

Lady Stafford—or the Countess-Duchess of Sutherland's magnificent memoir of her Duke, bound in morocco, with a beautiful engraving of him, reached me yesterday, but I have been in such a bother of tenants and business, I have had time only to look at the engraving and the kind inscription to myself.

Mrs. Edgeworth writes:

At the time of the general election in 1835, Maria was placed in a painful position as her brother's agent. The tenants were forced by the priests to vote against their landlord, and in his absence my son-in-law, Captain Fox,

who had been much interested for the defeated candidate, wished to punish the refractory tenants by forcing them to pay up what is called the *hanging-gale* of rent. Maria was grieved at any proceeding which would interrupt the long-continued friendship between these tenants and their landlord, and she was also anxious that there should be no misunderstanding between her brother and her brother-in-law. Captain Fox wrote to Sneyd to explain his views, and upon receiving Sneyd's letter in reply Maria writes to him of her sentiments on the occasion.

MARIA *to* C. SNEYD EDGEWORTH, ESQ.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Feb.* 12, 1835.

I feel your kindness now most particularly in giving me your full opinion, and desiring mine without one word of reproach on not having heard from me. I had written a long letter, but thinking it better Barry should write to you himself, I determined to burn and burnt what I had written to you, and scribbled a page in its stead of I know not what—nonsense I believe. And now what remains to do? My sense, if I have any, is quite as much at your service as my nonsense has been. And first for *General Principles*, to those independently of the particular case we should recur. I quite agree with you, as you do with my father, in the general principle that according to the British Constitution the voters at elections should be free, that the landlords should not *force* their tenants to vote. But a landlord must and should and ever will have *influence*, and this is one way in which property is represented and the real balance of the constitution preserved. My father in fact always did use the influence of being a good kind landlord, as well as the favour of leaving a hanging half-year in their

hands. I never knew him in any instance *revenge* a tenant's voting against him, but I have heard him say, and I know it was his principle, that he was not bound to show favour or affection to any tenant who voted what is called against his landlord. The calling for the *hanging-gale* may, in this point of view, come under his principles, as it is only the withdrawing of a favour—the resumption of a landlord's right; it may be said not to be the infliction of an injury or the going one tittle beyond the law; nor even putting yourself in the power of Parliament to notice it as unconstitutional. This is literally true—so far—and further I admit, for I say candidly the whole on both sides that occurs to me—I admit, that I believe if my father were at this moment living, and knew how shamefully the priests have conducted themselves at the last election, how they had *forced* his tenants and all others whom they could *bully* to vote against their own will, full as much as against their landlord, he might himself be inclined to depart from his principle and to use force over his tenants to balance the brutal force and violence on the other side.

I say, my father might be so inclined, and his first warmth of temper and indignation doubtless would so urge him, but still,

> The golden curb discretion sets on bravery,

would act and rein in his temper in the first instance, and his reason would rally and represent that it is never either morally lawful or politically wise to do evil that good may come of it. Because the priests have used force and intimidation, such as their situation and means put in their power, are landlords to do likewise? and are the poor tenants in this world and the next to be ruined and excommunicated between them? Are we to recriminate and

revenge because the priests and the people have done so? beaten or beating as brutal force decides?

The honest constitutional means of resisting the horrible wrong the priests have been guilty of in the last election is by publishing the facts, bringing them as they now must be brought in all their enormity before Parliament. As far as every private individual can assist in bringing these truths to light and in influencing public opinion by the eloquence of tongue or pen he does right, as a man and as a gentleman, and a good member of society, and wisely in the present times, to stop, if possible, the power of democracy. And this, I am sure, my dear brother, is what you have done, and I do not wish you to do more or less.

With respect to Charles Fox, I think he will certainly stand the first opportunity. I am not sure that it will be for his happiness to be in Parliament; but I think he will make an honest and moderate member and will do well in Committees, and I think you may support him fairly; he will not be bitter Orange; he has good sense and temper. I hate the term I have just used—Orange, and I would avoid saying Whig or Tory if I could, and consider only what is right and best to be done in our time. I think the late Ultra-Reform Liberalists went too far, and had they continued in power, would have overturned everything, both in England and Ireland, would have let in upon us the ragamuffin democracy, cried havoc, etc.

I think that nothing less than the decided, perhaps despotic hand of the Duke of Wellington, could prevent this catastrophe, and the sense of Mr. Peel will aid, I trust. The Duke has been a stander-by and has had leisure to repent the error which turned him out before, viz. of declaring that he would have no reform. Mr. Peel has

well guarded against this in his address on his return. What we must pray for is, that the hands of the present Government may be strengthened sufficiently to enable them to prevent the mischiefs prepared by the last Administration, and that, having seen the error, they may be wise in time.

Innumerable were the improvements which were effected by Mrs. and Miss Edgeworth for the advantage of their poorer neighbours in the immediate vicinity of their home. Cottagers' houses were rebuilt or made comfortable, schools built, and roads improved. A legacy of diamonds from a relation was sold by Miss Edgeworth that she might build a market house in the village, with a room over it for the magistrates' Petty Sessions. She endeavoured to be on the best terms with the Catholic priests, to whom she showed constant kindness and hospitality. Her poorer neighbours were made sharers in all her interests or pleasures, and all those she employed were treated as friends rather than servants. All her sympathies were in behalf of Ireland. Yet she met with no return of affection or sympathy. In 1836 we find Mrs. Farrar writing of Edgeworthstown:

It was market-day: so the main street was full of the lower order of Irish, with their horses and carts, asses and

panniers, tables and stands full of eatables and articles of clothing. Sometimes the cart or car served as a counter on which to display their goods. The women, in bright-coloured cotton gowns and white caps with full double borders, made a very gay appearance. But as we passed through the crowd to the schoolhouse the enmity of the Papists to Protestant landholders was but too evident.

Though Mrs. Edgeworth had been the Lady Bountiful of the village for many years, there were no bows for her or her friends, no making way before her, no touching of hats, no pleasant looks. A sullen expression and a dogged immovability were on every side of us.

MARIA *to* PAKENHAM EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN,
ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN THE MORNING, 1835.

How provoking, how chilling a feeling it gives of the distance between us, my dear Pakenham, that we must wait twelve months for an answer to any question the most important or the most trivial! But, thank heaven, letters and journals—bating this year between—do bring us happily together, almost face to face and smile to smile. I have often admired the poor Irishman's oratorical bull when he exclaimed, as he looked through a telescope for the first time and saw the people at a cottage door, miles off, brought near, "Then I heard 'em speak quite plain, I think." I think I sometimes hear you speaking and hear the people call you Sahib.

You have seen in the papers the death of our amiable friend, Mr. Malthus. How well he loved you! His lectureship on Political Economy has been filled up by a

very able and deserving friend of mine, Mr. Jones, whose book on Rents you have just been reading, and whose book and self I had the pleasure of first introducing to Lord Lansdowne, under whose Administration this appointment was made. The pupils at Haileybury must now learn from Jones's lectures the objections he made to Malthus's system! I remember once hearing the answer of a sceptic in Political Economy, when reproached with not being of some Political Economy Club. "Whenever I see any two of you gentlemen agree, I shall be happy to agree with you."

I hope your box of seeds will come safe and will grow. I daresay Harriet will have told you of the Cornish gentleman she met at Black Castle, who told of the blue hydrangea fifteen feet high, and bearing such a profusion of flowers that they were counted, 2352 bunches, each bunch as large as his head! We endeavoured to correct, and said florets for bunches, presuming he so meant, but he distinctly said bunches—so make what you can of it.

March 19.

Yesterday I am sure you recollected and honoured as Barry and Sophy's wedding day. Honora had the breakfast table covered with flowers, primroses, violets, polyanthus, and laurustinus, and some of Sophy's own snowdrops, double and single, which obligingly lingered on purpose to celebrate the day.

Did you see how Lord Darnley cut his foot with an axe while he was hewing the root of a tree, and died in consequence of lock-jaw! Harriet, who knew him and all the good he did in their neighbourhood, is very sorry for him.

I have not, I believe, mentioned to you any books except my own; but we have been amused with the *Invisible Gentleman.* You must swallow one monstrous magical

absurdity at the beginning, and the rest will go down glibly —that is, *amusing*.

Instructive and entertaining: Burne's *Mission to Lahore and Bokhara*.

Instructive, interesting, and entertaining: Roget on *Physiology, with reference to Theology*—one of the Bridgewater Treatises, full of facts the most curious, arranged in the most beautifully luminous manner. The infinitely large, and the infinitely small in creation, admirably displayed.

Hannah More's *Letters:* many of them entertaining —many admirable for manner and matter, altogether too much; two volumes would have been better than four.

Inglis's *Ireland:* I think he is an honest writer, a man of great observation and ability, and a true admirer of the beauties of nature. He exaggerates and makes some mistakes, as all travellers do.

Still drops from life some withering joy away.

Year after year, we must witness these sad losses. Aunt Alicia gone! and Aunt Bess Waller, of whom you were so fond. What an amiable and highly cultivated mind she had, and so hospitable and kind.

To Miss Ruxton.

Edgeworthstown, *March* 31, 1835.

Harriet told me, my dear Sophy, that she found you in bed, reading *Popular Tales*, or some of my old things—thank you, thank you, my dear, for loving them. I hope that this will find you better, and that your Black Castle walks, leaning on that kind Isabella's arm, will have quite restored you.

I have been reading Roget's most admirable Bridge-

water Treatise—admirable in every way, scientific, moral, and religious, in the most deep and exalted manner—religious, raising the mind through nature's works up to nature's GOD, which must increase and exalt piety where it exists, and create and confirm the devotional feelings where they have lain dormant. All his facts are most curious, and the exclamation, "how fearfully and wonderfully we are made," may be extended to the ugliest tadpole that *wabbles* in a ditch till he is a frog, and the microscope invented by that creature man endowed with—

Luckily a hair in my pen stopped me, or I might have gone on to another page, in my hot fit of enthusiasm.

To MISS RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Sept.* 1835.

Have you seen in the papers reports about the marriage of Lord John Russell to Lady R.? All true—Lady Ribblesdale, *ci-devant* Adelaide Lister, Aunt Mary's niece, a young widow with a charming little boy; this morning Aunt Mary had a letter from Lady Ribblesdale herself. If she was to marry again she could not have made a more suitable match. He is a very domestic man, and, save his party violence and folly, very amiable and sensible.

Mr. George Ticknor[1] and his family visited Edgeworthstown in August 1835, and remained there several days, which were a very interesting and happy time to Miss Edge-

[1] The well-known Professor of Modern Literature at Harvard University, author of the *History of Spanish Literature*, etc. Born 1791, died 1871.

worth. Mr. Ticknor describes his visit at great length in his journals, and the first appearance of Miss Edgeworth:

A small, short, spare lady of about sixty-seven, with extremely frank and kind manners, and who always looks straight into your face with a pair of mild deep gray eyes whenever she speaks to you. Her conversation, always ready, is as full of vivacity and variety as I can imagine. It is also no less full of good-nature. She is disposed to defend everybody, as far as she can, though never so far as to be unreasonable. And in her intercourse with her family she is quite delightful, referring constantly to Mrs. Edgeworth, who seems to be the authority for all matters of fact, and most kindly repeating jokes to her infirm aunt, Miss Sneyd, who cannot hear them, and who seems to have for her the most unbounded affection and admiration.

About herself as an author she seems to have no reserve or secrets. . . . But, though she talks freely about herself and her works, she never introduces the subject, and never seems glad to continue it. She talks quite as well, and with quite as much interest, on everything else.

It is plain that the family make a harmonious whole, and by those who visited Edgeworthstown when it was much larger, and were proud of the children of all the wives of Mr. Edgeworth, with their connections produced by marriage, so as to prove the most heterogeneous relationships, I am told there was always the same striking union and agreeable intercourse among them all, to the number of sometimes fifteen or twenty.

. . . The house, and many of its arrangements — the bells, the doors, etc.—bear witness to that love of mechan-

ical trifling of which Mr. Edgeworth was so often accused. But things in general are very convenient and comfortable through the house, though, as elsewhere in Ireland, there is a want of English exactness and finish. However, all such matters, even if carried much farther than they are, would be mere trifles in the midst of so much kindness, hospitality, and intellectual pleasures of the highest order as we enjoyed under their roof, where hospitality is so abundant that they have often had twenty or thirty friends come upon them unexpectedly, when the family was much larger than it is now.

Maria Edgeworth was now the real owner of Edgeworthstown. Her half-brother Lovell's embarrassments had obliged him to sell his paternal inheritance, and Miss Edgeworth gladly expended the fortune which had come to her through literature in preserving it from falling into the hands of strangers. She only stipulated that she herself should remain as much "a background figure" as before. Lovell Edgeworth was still the apparent owner of Edgeworthstown. Mrs. Edgeworth was still the mistress of the house, consulted and deferred to in everything. In her note of invitation to Mr. and Mrs. Ticknor she says: "The sooner you can come to us the better, because Mrs. Edgeworth is now at home with us . . . as you would find this house much

more agreeable when she is at home; and in truth you never could see it to advantage, or see things as they really are in this family, unless when she makes part of it, and when she is at the head of it."[1] Maria Edgeworth unconsciously depicted herself when describing Miss Emma Granby, "The Modern Griselda."

All her thoughts were intent upon making her friends happy. She seemed to live in them more than in herself, and from sympathy rose the greatest pleasure and pain of her existence. Her sympathy was not of that useless kind which is called forth only by the elegant fictitious sorrows of a heroine of romance; hers was ready for all the occasions of real life; nor was it to be easily checked by the imperfections of those to whom she could be of service.

Amongst those who visited Edgeworthstown about this time was the American authoress, Mrs. Farrar, who writes:

When shown to our bedroom we found such an extraordinary lock to the door[2] that we dared not shut it for fear of not being able to open it again. That room, too, was unlike any I ever saw. It was very large, with three huge windows, two of them heavily curtained, and the third converted into a small wardrobe, with doors of pink cotton on a wooden frame. It had two very large four-post

[1] *Life of George Ticknor.*

[2] One of Mr. Edgeworth's inventions.

bedsteads, with full suits of curtains, and an immense folding-screen that divided the room in two, making each occupant as private as if in a separate room, with a dressing-table and ample washing conveniences on each side. A large grate filled with turf, and all ready for lighting, with a peat basket lined with tin, and also filled with the same fuel, reminded us strongly that we were in Ireland. Large wax candles were on the mantelpiece, and every convenience necessary to our comfort.

Miss Edgeworth was very short, and carried herself very upright, with a dapper figure and quick movements. She was the remains of a blonde, with light eyes and hair; she was now gray, but wore a dark frisette, whilst the gray hair showed through her cap behind. In conversation we found her delightful. She was full of anecdotes about remarkable people, and often spoke from her personal knowledge of them. Her memory, too, was stored with valuable information, and her manner of narrating was so animated that it was difficult to realise her age. In telling an anecdote of Mirabeau, she stepped out before us, and, extending her arms, spoke a sentence of his in the impassioned manner of a French orator, and did it so admirably that it was quite thrilling.

Another American visitor, in the same year of 1836, the Rev. William B. Sprogue, writes:[1]

The Edgeworth house is a fine spacious old mansion, with a splendid lawn stretching before it, and everything to indicate opulence and hereditary distinction. . . . Miss Edgeworth was the first person to meet me; and she

[1] *European Celebrities*, 1855.

immediately introduced me to her mother, Mrs. Edgeworth, her father's fourth wife, and her sister, Miss Honora Edgeworth. Miss Edgeworth, in her personal appearance, was below middle size; her face was exceedingly plain, though strongly indicative of intellect; and though she seemed to possess great vigour of body as well as of mind, it was, after all, the vigour of old age. I supposed her to be about sixty-five, but I believe she was actually on the wrong side of seventy. Her stepmother, Mrs. Edgeworth, must have been, I think, rather younger than Maria, and was not only a lady of high intelligence, but of great personal attractions, and withal of a very serious turn of mind. As Miss Edgeworth knew that my visit was to be limited to a single day, she told me almost immediately that she wished to know in what way she could contribute most to my gratification, —whether by remaining in the house or walking over the grounds. She talked upon a great variety of subjects, but there was nothing about her that had ever any affinity to showing off or trying to talk well: she evidently did not know how to talk otherwise. Circumstances led her to speak of her experience with some of her publishers. She mentioned that one of them had repeatedly requested her to abate from the amount which he had engaged to pay her, and that she had done so; but at length, after she had told him explicitly to make proposals he would abide by, he wrote her a letter, saying that he wished another abatement, and that he found that on the whole he had lost by her works; and she then wrote him in reply, that in consequence of the loss he had sustained, she would transfer her publications to other hands. He afterwards earnestly requested that she would excuse him for having thus written, and desired to retain the works; but *she* was inflexible, and *he* very angry. Her former publisher, she

said, when he found himself dying, called for a letter to her which was then unfinished, and requested that there should be inserted a promise of ten or twelve hundred pounds more than he had engaged to give her for one of her works; for it had been so much more profitable to him than he expected, that he could not die in peace till he had done justly by her. And his heirs executed his will in accordance with this dying suggestion.

Home interests, home cares, and home sorrows were henceforth increasingly to occupy Miss Edgeworth's life.

MARIA *to* MISS RUXTON.

LOUGH GLYN, *Sept.* 16, 1836.

You may suppose how I felt the kindness of your note. You are now my friend of longest standing and dearest parentage in this world; and in this world, in which I have lived nearly three quarters of a century, I have found nothing one quarter so well worth living for as old friends.

We go to Moore Hall to-morrow. We had here yesterday a party at dinner, all exquisite in their way; Lord and Lady Dillon and Miss Dillon, Lord Oranmore and his son, Mr. Brown, and two Miss Stricklands and their brothers; and coloured fireworks in the evening: of all of which you shall hear more when we meet. Breakfast-bell ringing in my ears.

March 5, 1837.

The last accounts will have prepared you—more prepared, perhaps, than I was, for hope had lived in spite of reason when life was gone—your beloved and most amiable,

angelic-tempered goddaughter[1] is gone. She preserved her charming mind quite clear all through, and had her mother with her, and the comfort of knowing that her children were in the care of Mr. Butler and Harriet.

To MISS MARGARET RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Dec.* 17, 1837.

We are very anxious indeed to hear of Sophy:[2] the last account Harriet gave was quite alarming. I see Richard going about the house with his watch in his hand to feel Sophy's pulse, and looking so anxious. How glad he must be that he had returned home, and to Sophy what a comfort it must be, to have the certainty of his affection, and to have the earliest companion of her childhood and her manly friend beside her now! I will go to her instantly if she desires it.

I long to hear that you have had, and that you like, the *Memoirs of Mr. Smedley.* I am sure that, when Sophy is well enough to hear or to read anything, that book will be the very thing for her.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

TRIM, *July* 25, 1838.

Mrs. Lazarus's[3] death did indeed shock and grieve me. But it is, as you say, the condition, the doom of advancing, advanced age, to see friend after friend go; but in proportion as it detaches one from life, it still more makes us

[1] Her sister Sophy, Mrs. Barry Fox, who died March 1.

[2] Miss Ruxton, Miss Edgeworth's cousin and dearest friend, died at Black Castle, December 30.

[3] Formerly Miss Mordecai.

value the friends we have left. And continually, at every fresh blow, I really *wonder*, and am thankful, most truly thankful, that I have so many, so much left.

To MISS MARGARET RUXTON.

Oct. 10, 1838.

I am sure, my dear Margaret, you were pleased at Honora's communication: you wrote a most kind and pleasant letter of congratulation.[1] She has hitherto been most fortunate in pleasing all her friends, both as to the fact and as to the time and manner of telling. Do you remember a conversation we had standing upon the hearth in my room one night, between eleven and twelve, the witching hour, and what you asked me about Captain Beaufort? The secret had then been confided to me; and I hope you will do me the justice to acknowledge that, open-hearted and open-mouthed as I am, I can keep a secret WONDERFUL well.

To MR. AND MRS. TICKNOR.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Nov.* 1, 1838.

. . . My sister Honora is going to be married to a person every way suited to her, and that is saying a great deal, as you, who most kindly and justly appreciated her, will readily join with me in thinking. The gentleman's name, Captain Beaufort, R.N., perhaps you may be acquainted with, as he is in a public situation, and not unknown to literary and scientific fame. He *is* a naval officer (I hope you like this officer's name?). He made some years ago a survey of

[1] On the engagement of her sister Honora to Captain Beaufort, her stepmother's brother.

the coast of Karamania, and wrote a small volume on that survey, which has obtained for him a good reputation. He has been for some years Hydrographer-Royal . . . in one word, he is a person publicly esteemed, and privately he is beloved and esteemed by all who know him, most by those who love him best. He is and has been well known to us ever since the present Mrs. Edgeworth's marriage with my father; Captain Beaufort is Mrs. Edgeworth's youngest brother. As Mrs. E. is Honora's *step*mother, you see that he is no relation whatever to Honora. But the nearness of the connection has given us all the best means of knowing him thoroughly. He was my dear father's most beloved pupil and friend; by pupil I mean that being so much younger made him look up to my father with reverence, and learn from him in science and literature with delight. Thus he has been long connected with all I love. He has been a widower two years. He has three sons and four daughters. . . . The youngest daughter, Emily, is a delightful child. Captain Beaufort lives in London, 11 Gloucester Place: has a very comfortable house and sufficient fortune for all their moderate wishes. Honora's fortune, which is ample, will give them affluence.

My dear Mrs. Ticknor, I know you particularly liked Honora, and that you will be interested in hearing all these particulars, though it seems impertinent to detail them across the Atlantic to one who will, I fear, never see any one of the persons I have mentioned. Yet affections such as yours keep warm very long and at a great distance.

I feel that I have got into a snug little corner in both your hearts, and that you will excuse a great deal from me, therefore I go on without scruple drawing upon your sympathy, and you will not protest my draft.

You saw how devoted Honora was to her aunt, Mrs.

Mary Sneyd, whom you liked so much; and you will easily imagine what a struggle there has been in Honora's mind before she would consent to a marriage with even such a man as Captain Beaufort, when it must separate her from her aunt. Captain Beaufort himself felt this so much that he would never have pressed it. He once thought that she might be prevailed upon to accompany them to London, and to live with them. But Mrs. Mary Sneyd could not bear to leave Mrs. Edgeworth, and this place which she has made her heart's home. She decided Captain Beaufort and her niece to make her happy by completing their union, and letting her feel that she did not prevent the felicity of the two persons she loves best now in the world. She remains with us.

The marriage is to take place next Tuesday or Thursday, and my Aunt Mary will go to church with her niece and give her away. I must tell you a little characteristic trait of this aunt, the least selfish of all human beings. She has been practising getting up early in the morning, which she has not done for two years—has never got up for breakfast. But she has trained herself to rising at the hour at which she must rise on the wedding day, and has walked up and down her own room the distance she must walk up and down the aisle of the church, to ensure her being accustomed to the exertion, and able to accomplish it easily. This she did for a long time without our knowing it, till Honora found it out. Mrs. Mary Sneyd is quite well and in excellent spirits.

A younger sister of mine, Lucy, of whom you have heard us speak as an invalid, who was at Clifton with that dear Sophy whom we have lost, is now recovered, and has returned home to take Honora's place with her Aunt Mary; and Aunt Mary likes to have her, and Lucy feels this a

great motive to her to overcome a number of nervous feelings which formed part of her illness. A regular course of occupations and duties, and feeling herself essential to the happiness and the holding together of a family she so loves, will be the best strengthening medicine for her. She arrived at home last night. My sister Fanny and her husband, Lestock Wilson, are with us. My sister has much improved in health: she is now able to walk without pain, and bore her long journey and voyage here wonderfully. I have always regretted, and always shall regret, that this sister Fanny of mine had not the pleasure of becoming acquainted with you. You really must revisit England. My sister Harriet Butler, and Mr. Butler, and the three dear little Foxes, are all round me at this instant. Barry Fox, their father, will be with us in a few days, and Captain Beaufort returns from London on Monday. You see what a large and happy family we are!

Mr. Butler will perform the happy, awful ceremony. How people who do not love can even dare to marry, to approach the altar to pronounce that solemn vow, I cannot conceive.

My thoughts are so engrossed by this subject that I absolutely cannot tell you of anything else. You must tell me of everything that interests you, else I shall not forgive myself for my egotism.

To MISS MARGARET RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Nov.* 8, 1838.

You are the first person I write to upon returning from church after the accomplishment of Honora and Captain Beaufort's marriage. Captain Beaufort was affected more than any man I ever saw in the same circumstances, yet in

the most manly manner. Aunt Mary went to church, as she had intended: they had both received her blessing, kneeling as to a mother, the evening before in her own room. Lestock and Barry were at the church door, to hand her up the aisle. Old Mr. Keating was there, excellent, warm-hearted man; and Mr. Butler performed the ceremony. The bride and bridegroom went off from the church door, and are, I suppose, by this time, five o'clock, at Trim.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH, IN LONDON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Aug.* 25, 1839.

You will, I am sure, give me credit for having so well and pleasantly performed our visits—Rosa, Lucy, and Francis with me—to the Pakenhams and Pollards. Francis found Mr. Pollard very agreeable, and was charmed with Mrs. Pollard's manners and conversation. We called on Mrs. Dease on our return, and walked in her garden, in which, in all my seventy years, I never walked before, and saw huge bunches of crimson Indian pinks, some of which are now in my garden, and well doing there.

In the morning, before we went to Kinturk, came a note from a gentleman at the *White Hart*, Edgeworthstown, waiting for an answer: an American medical professor, Dr. Gibson. It was very unlucky that I was engaged to go out —irrevocably settled: however, I sat two hours and a half with Dr. Gibson, and very clever and agreeable I found him.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

TRIM, *Nov.* 1, 1840.

I am *perfect*, dearest mother, so no more about it, and thank you from my heart and every component part of

my precious self for all the care and successful care you have taken of me, your old petted nursling. Thank you and Mrs. Mitchell for the potted meat luncheon, and Mr. Tuite for his grapes,—Mary Anne and Charlotte had some. I was less tired than I could have expected when I reached Trim, and there was Mr. Butler on the steps ready to welcome us, and candles and firelight in the drawing-room so cheerful. I slept like a sleeping top. Harriet read out *Ferdinand and Isabella*, which, with all its chivalresque interest, I do like very much. I am sure Rosa's[1] Spanish interest in the book will grow by that it feeds upon, and I am very glad that she who has such fresh genuine pleasure in literature should have this book, which is so beautifully written, because it is so well felt by the author. Poor kind man. I will write to Mr. Ticknor as soon as I come to Finis.

The birds got home well; but travelling, Harriet tells me, does not agree with them, because they cannot stick upon their perch, and it is a perpetual struggle between cling and jolt.

Nov. 10.

I enclose a note of Miss Crampton's and two notes of Lady Normanby's. I never read more unaffected, affectionate, wife-like letters. How gratifying they must be to Crampton, and it raises one's opinion of Lord Normanby himself to find he can so attach a woman and a wife.

The *History of a Flirt*, which Harriet is reading to me, is rather entertaining but not interesting—a new and ingenious idea of a flirt, who is not looking for establishment or match-making, and therefore her disinterestedness

[1] Mrs. Francis Edgeworth.

charms all the lords and gentlemen who have been used to match-making mothers and young-lady-hunters for titles, and under favour of this disinterestedness her insolence and faithlessness is passed over, while all the time she is in love with a captain with "soft Venetian eyes," as Mrs. Thrale used to say of Piozzi.

Nov. 16.

The ear-comforter or earwig is beautiful and comfortable, and is, I hear, as becoming to me as was the Chancellor's wig to Francis Forbes when he acted *Of Age To-morrow.* I am acting of age to-day, and very gay, and perhaps may arrive at years of discretion at eighty, if I live so long. I certainly wish to live till next month that I may see you all at home again. You know the classic distich, which my father pointed out and translated for me, which was over the entrance door of the Cross Keys inn, near Beighterton:

> If you are told you will die to-morrow you smile:
> If you are told you will die a month hence you will sigh.

I do not know where this may be in a book, but I know it is in human nature.

To MR. TICKNOR.

TRIM, *Nov.* 19, 1840.

. . . I am afraid to invite you to come and see us again, lest you should be disenchanted, and we should lose the delightful gratification we enjoy in your glamour of friendship. Aunt Mary, however, is really all you think and saw her; and in her good years still a proof, as you describe her —and a remarkable proof—of the power of mind over

time, suffering, and infirmities, and an example of Christian virtues, making old age lovely and interesting.

Your prayer, that she might have health and strength to enjoy the gathering of friends round her has been granted. Honora and her husband, and Fanny and her husband, have been with us all this summer for months; and we have enjoyed ourselves as much as your kind heart could wish. Especially "that beautiful specimen of a highly cultivated gentlewoman," as you so well called Mrs. Edgeworth, has been blest with the sight of all her children round her, all her living daughters and their husbands, and her grandchildren. Francis will settle at home, and be a good country gentleman and his own agent, to Mrs. Edgeworth's and all our inexpressible comfort and support, also for the good of the county, as a resident landlord and magistrate *much* needed. As *he* is at home I can be spared from the rent-receiving business, etc., and leaving him with his mother, Aunt Mary, and Lucy, I can indulge myself by accepting an often-urged invitation from my two sisters, Fanny and Honora, to spend some months with them in London. I have chosen to go at this quiet time of year, as I particularly wish not to encounter the bustle and dissipation and lionising of London. For though I am such a minnikin lion now, and so old, literally without teeth or claws, still there be, that might rattle at the grate to make me get up and come out, and stand up to play tricks for them, and this I am not able or inclined to do. I am afraid I should growl; I never could be as good-natured as Sir Walter Scott used to be, when rattled for and made to "come out and stand on his hind legs," as he used to describe it, and then go quietly to sleep again.

I shall use my privilege of seventy-two—rising seventy-three—and shall keep in my comfortable den; I will not go

out. "Nobody asked you, ma'am," to play lion, may perhaps be said or sung to me, and I shall not be sorry nor mortified by not being asked to exhibit, but heartily happy to be with my sisters and their family and family friends—*all* for which I go—knowing my own mind very well I speak the plain truth. I shall return to Edgeworthstown before the London *season*, as it is called, commences, *i.e.* by the end of March, or at the very beginning of April.

This is all I have, for the present, to tell you of my dear self, or of our family doings or plannings.

. . . I do not know whether I was most interested, dear Mrs. Ticknor, in your picture of your domestic life and happy house and home, or in the view you gave me of your public festivity and celebration of your American day of days—your national festival in honour of your Declaration of Independence. It was never, I suppose, more joyously, innocently, and advantageously held than on the day you describe so delightfully with the accuracy of an eye-witness. I think I too have seen all this, and thank you for showing it to me. It is a picture that will never leave the memory of my heart. I only wish that we could ever hope to have in Ireland any occasion or possibility of such happy and peaceable meetings, with united sympathy and for the keeping alive a feeling of national patriotism. No such point of union can be found, alas! in Ireland; no subject upon which sects and parties could coalesce for an hour, or join in rejoicing or feeling for their country! Father Matthews, one might have hoped, considering the good he has effected for all Ireland, and considering his own unimpeachable character and his great liberality, admitting all sects and all parties to take his pledge and share his benevolent efforts, *might* have formed a central point round which all might gather. But no such hope! for I am

just now assured his very Christian charity and liberality are complained of by his Catholic brethren, priests and laity, who now begin to abuse him for giving the pledge to *Protestants*, and say, "What good our fastings, our temperance, our being of the true faith, if Father Matthews treat *heretics all as one*, as Catholics themselves! and would have them saved in this world and the next too! Then I would not doubt but at the last he'd *turn tail!* aye, turn Protestant himself *entirely*."

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET, *Dec.* 26.

While Francis is *pro*-ing and con-ing with Fanny about alterations in his house at Clewer, I may go on with my scribbling, and tell you that Honora luncheoned here, and then off we went to Mrs. Debrizey's, Mrs. Darwin's, Mrs. Hensleigh Wedgewood, Mrs. Guillemard, and Mrs. Marcet —at Mrs. Edward Romilly's.

Mrs. Darwin is the youngest daughter of Jos. Wedgewood, and is worthy of both father and mother; affectionate, and unaffected, and—young as she is, full of old times, she has her mother's radiantly cheerful countenance, even now, debarred from all London gaieties and all gaiety but that of her own mind by close attendance on her sick husband.

Mrs. Marcet was ill in bed, but Mr. and Mrs. Edward Romilly were pleasing and willing to be pleased, and he talked over his father's *Memoirs* candidly and sensibly, and like a good son and a man of sense.

"I had like to have forgotten"—strange expression! can Mr. Butler explain it? *I had like to have* forgotten and must tell Aunt Mary about Mrs. Lister calling.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

January 2, 1841.

Thank you for your birthday good wishes. How many birthdays have brought me the same never-failing kindness.

A very pleasant meeting we had yesterday at your brother's.[1] Honora, dear Honora, was so nice and kind, nobody but ourselves. At second course appeared the essential trifle,[2] and, trifle as it was, it was quite delightful to me with Honora's smile.

Did you ever taste figs stuffed with almonds? I hope you never may taste them! very bad, I assure you, but how the almonds got in puzzled me; all tight and closed as the outer skin looks without ridge or joining.

Did you ever taste Imperial Tokay? Your brother gave me some of the best ever tasted, I am told; and what do you think I said?

"Why, this cannot be Tokay!"

"Did you ever taste Tokay before?" said he.

"O yes, very often; but this is not Tokay."

"Be pleased to tell us what it is then," quoth Lestock.

"I don't know; but not Tokay, or a different sort from what I ever tasted, for that was sour and always drunk in green glasses."

Suddenly I recollected that I meant *Hock!*

Do you recollect the history of the Irishman, who declared that he had seen anchovies growing on the walls at Gibraltar? Challenged a gentleman for doubting him, met, and fired, and hit his man, and when the man who

[1] Recently married to Honora Edgeworth.

[2] A trifle always appeared on Maria Edgeworth's birthday, because once on New Year's Day when a trifle had been ordered and the dish was placed on the table there was found under the flowers, not cake and cream, but a little story Maria had written, "A Trifle." The young folk had a real trifle afterwards.

was hit, sprang up as he received the shot, and the second observed—"How he capers!"

"By the powers! It was capers I meant 'stead of anchovies."

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET, *Jan.* 10, 1841.

À propos du pluie, à propos du beau temps—I think of you and ten thousand times a week. ("I hate exaggeration.") I wish for you when I am in want of some unremembered or *disremembered* name. I do love that Irish verb disremember, and I conjugate it daily from the infinitive to the preterpluperfect. Last week I preterpluperfectly disremembered when talking to Morris of Fortunio's gifted men, whether the legs of him who outrunneth the hare were tied with green or red? Parties run high for green and for red —please to settle the question.

Fanny has been reading to me Darwin's *Voyage;* delightful it is.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET, *Jan.* 13, 1841.

Most agreeable dinner here yesterday; the *convives* were: Dr. Lushington, Mr. Andrews; Mrs. Andrews at the last sent a regret—ill in bed with a headache. Honora came in her stead. Mr. Macintosh and Miss Carr; Dr. Lushington beside Fanny, and carving remarkably well and most entertaining and agreeable; he raised the heart's laugh frequently, and the head's by fresh, not old-faded-London-diner-out bon-mots, anecdotes, and facts worth knowing, all with the assistance of Mr. Andrews, so remarkably agreeable and gentlemanly a

gentleman; they played into each other's hands and mine delightfully, and Fanny's, and Honora's, and the ball came to everybody pat, in turn. The ball did I say? Boomerang I should have said, for it came back always nicely to the thrower.

I must tell you an anecdote I heard yesterday from Mr. Kenyon, brother of Lord Kenyon's, a saying of Mrs. Brooke, sister of Baron Garrow, who, notwithstanding his bullying manner in court, was a man easily swayed in private, always influenced by the last thing said by the last person in his company—all which was compressed by Mrs. Brooke into: "With my brother *presence is power.*"

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET, *Feb.* 24, 1841.

My ultimate intention and best hope for my own selfish satisfaction is to go with you and Mr. Butler to that poor *uncentred*[1] desolate home at Edgeworthstown.

What an inexpressible comfort that you were with your mother, Lucy, and Honora, and my dear lost aunt to the last.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

March 14, 1841.

Here I am, like a Sybarite, but with luxuries such as a Sybarite or Sybaritess never dreamed of: a cup of good coffee and some dry toast and butter, a good coal fire on my right, a light window on my left, dressing-table opposite, with large looking-glass, which reflects, not my face, which for good reasons of my own I never wish to see, but a beautiful green lawn and cedars of Lebanon; and on my

[1] Mrs. Mary Sneyd died at the age of ninety, on the 10th of February 1841.

mantelpiece stand jars of Nankin china, and shells from—Ocean knows where. And where do you think I am? At Heathfield Lodge, Croydon, the seat of Gerard Ralstone, Esq.; and met here at a large dinner yesterday Mr. Napier, and he comes for me to-morrow, and takes me to Forest Hill. At this dinner were two celebrated American gentlemen—Mr. Sparkes, who wrote Washington's *Life;* and Mr. Clisson, a man of fortune, and benevolently enthusiastic about colonisation in Liberia.

After luncheon I saw march by to church a whole regiment of youths from Addiscombe, which is near here.

But now I must retrograde to tell you, as I have a few minutes more than I expected, of a visit I had an hour before I set out, from a man fresh from Africa—a Scotchman by birth, a missionary by vocation, who had been twenty years abroad, almost all that time in Africa: sent to the Hottentots in the first place, and he converted many. They were taught to sow and to reap, and the women to *sew* in the other way, all by this indefatigable Mr. Moffatt; and they taught him on their part how to do the CLUCK, and Mr. Moffatt did it for me. It is indescribable and inimitable. It is not so loud as a hen's cluck to her chickens, but more quick and abrupt.

He said that when he was ordered to return home, he felt it as a sentence of banishment. "I had lived so long in Africa, I felt it my home, and I had almost forgotten how to speak English. I almost dreaded to be among white faces again."

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET.

Mr. Napier brought me here by half after twelve.

I had a delightful drive with him in his little pony phaeton from Croydon to Forest Hill. Mr. and Mrs.

Napier are more and more delightful to me in conversation and manners the more I see of them. A brother, Captain Napier, very conversable, and full of humour; he has a charming daughter, and has been in all parts of the world, and loves Ireland and the Irish.

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET, *April* 1841.

I must tell you now of my visit to Warfield Lodge. Henrietta and Wren met me at the station, and all the way, when they spoke, it seemed as if I had parted from them but yesterday. When I saw Miss O'Beirne, there was, opposite to me, that fine, full-coloured, full of life, speaking picture of Mrs. O'Beirne. The place is as pretty as ever, and it was impossible for the most hospitable luxury to do more for me, and with the most minute recollective attention to all my olden-times habits and ways. I would not for anything that could be given or done for me, not have paid this visit.

One evening Miss O'Beirne invited some friends I was particularly glad to see—three daughters of my dear Sir John Malcolm, all very fine young women, with fine souls, and vast energy and benevolence, worthy of him.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Sept.* 27.

I send you some Spanish books which I bought, with one eye upon you and one upon Rosa. I sat up till past one o'clock a few nights ago, and caught cold, looking through the whole of *Hudibras*, for what at last could not be found in it, though I still am confident it is there—

Murder is lawful made by the excess.

In the middle of my hunt my mind misgave me that

it was in the *Fable of the Bees*, and I went through it line by line, and for my pains can swear it is not there. It is wonderful that, at seventy-four, I can be so ardent in the chase, certainly not for the worth of the game, nor yet for the triumph of finding; for I care not whether I am the person to find it or not, so it is found. Pray find it for me.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *March* 10, 1842.

We have been much entertained and interested in Macaulay's "Life of Hastings," in the *Edinburgh;* but some of it is too gaudily written, and mean gaudiness, unsuited to the subject—such as the dresses of the people at Westminster Hall; and I think Macaulay's indignation against Gleig for his adulation of Hastings, and his not feeling indignation against his crimes, is sometimes noble, and sometimes mean and vituperative.

To MRS. BEAUFORT.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *March* 12.

Mr. Creed, my dear good Mr. Creed, has been most kind in taking into his employment one of the young Gerrards who behaved so gallantly in recovering their father's arms from robbers. The poor people are seldom rewarded when they do right, yet surely, in the government of human creatures, Hope and Reward are strong and elevating powers, while Fear and Punishment can at best only restrain from crime Hope can produce the finest and most permanent springs of action.

We have not been able to go on with our reading for some days. The more I live I see more and more the

misery of uncultivated minds, and the happiness of the cultivated, when they can keep themselves free from literary and scientific jealousies and party spirit.

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *March* 1842.

I am surprised to find how much more history interests me now than when I was young, and how much more I am now interested in the same events recorded, and their causes and consequences shown, in this History of the French Revolution, and in all the History of Europe during the last quarter of a century, than I was when the news came fresh and fresh in the newspapers. I do not think I had sense enough to take in the relations and proportions of the events. It was like moving a magnifying glass over the parts of a beetle, and not taking in the whole.

To MISS MARGARET RUXTON, *then residing at* HYÈRES.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *April* 16, 1842.

It seems such an immense time since I have heard from you, so now I sit down to earn a letter.

And first I have to tell you that, on the 14th, between the hours of eleven and twelve, a new cousin of yours was brought into this world, a monstrous large boy: Rosa doing well: house very full,[1] but all as quiet as mice. We breakfast in the study, to keep all noise from Rosa in the plume room.

It is time to tell you that Pakenham is here, and Fanny,

[1] All the family had assembled to meet Pakenham Edgeworth on his return, on leave, from India.

and Honora, and Harriet, and Mary Anne, and Charlotte; and we are as happy as ever we can be. Pakenham's tastes are all domestic, yet he has the most perfect knowledge of business, great penetration of eye, and cool, self-possessed manners, like one used to judgment and command, yet not proud of doing either. He has brought with him such proofs of his industry as are quite astonishing; such collections of drawings, both botanical and sketches of country. How he found time to do all this, and spend six hours per day at Cucherry—all as one as sessions—and to write his journal of every day for eleven years, I really cannot comprehend; but so it is.

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *June* 17, 1842.

It is now five o'clock, and Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall have not come. It is Lestock's last day, and he and Fanny and Lucy are so busy and so happy putting the transit instrument to rights, and setting black spotted and yellow backed spinning spiders at work to spin for the meridian lines. I have just succeeded in catching the right sort by descending to the infernal regions, and setting kitchenmaid and housemaid at work. I was glad Mr. and Mrs. Hall did not arrive just at the crisis of the operation—all completed now.

Ask Mr. Butler if there is any subscription necessary or expected from me, now that I have been so honourably made an honorary member of the Royal Irish Academy? I would not for the world omit anything that ought to be done now that I am M.R.I.A.

July 8.

I am going literally to beg my bread and lodging at your door on my way to Dublin, and I do so *sans phrase*. I

remember that, when I used to write to offer myself to Aunt Ruxton, I regularly added, "You know, my dear aunt, I can sleep in a drawer;" and she used to answer, "I know you can, my dear, and you are welcome; but write a day beforehand, that I may have the drawer ready."

To MRS. FRANCIS BEAUFORT.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Oct.* 27, 1842.

Most kind and most judiciously kind Honora, you have written the very thing I had been thinking as I lay awake last night, I would write to you, but scrupled. I certainly will take your advice, and spend my Christmas at home with Pakenham, although I cannot, nor do I wish to, fill up his feeling of the blanks in this house. There is something mournful, yet pleasingly painful, in the sense of the ideal presence of the long-loved dead. Those images people and fill the mind with unselfish thoughts, and with the salutary feeling of responsibility and constant desire to be and to act in this world as the superior friend would have wished and approved.

There is such difficulty this season for the poor tenants to make up their rents; cattle, oats, butter, potatoes, all things have so sunk in price. In these circumstances it is not only humane, but absolutely necessary, that landlords should give more time than usual. Some cannot pay till after certain fairs in the beginning of November—that I must have stayed for, at all events. Indeed, they have shown so much consideration for me, and striven so to make up the money that they might not *detain* me, that I should be a brute and a tyrant if I did not do all I could on my part to accommodate them.

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Dec.* 1842.

Mrs. Hall has sent to me her last number, in which she gives Edgeworthstown. All the world here are pleased with it, and so am I. I like the way in which she has mentioned my father particularly. There is an evident kindness of heart, and care to avoid everything that could hurt any of our feelings, and at the same time a warmth of affectionate feeling unaffectedly expressed, that we all like it, in spite of our dislike to "that sort of thing."

Mrs. S. C. Hall's is perhaps the best picture extant of the family life at Edgeworthstown. She says:

Our principal object, in Longford County, was to visit Edgeworthstown, and to spend some time in the society of Miss Edgeworth. We entered the neat, nice, and pretty town at evening; all around us bore—as we had anticipated—the aspect of comfort, cheerfulness, good order, prosperity, and their concomitant, contentment. There was no mistaking the fact that we were in the neighbourhood of a resident Irish family, with minds to devise, and hands to effect improvement everywhere within reach of their control.

Edgeworthstown may almost be regarded as public property. From this mansion has emanated so much practical good to Ireland, and not alone to Ireland, but the civilised world. . . . The demesne is judiciously and abundantly planted, and the dwelling-house of Edgeworthstown is large and commodious. We drove up the avenue at evening. It was cheerful to see the lights sparkle through

the windows, and to feel the cold nose of the house-dog thrust into our hands as an earnest of welcome; it was pleasant to receive the warm greeting of Mrs. Edgeworth, and it was a high privilege to meet Miss Edgeworth in the library, the very room in which had been written the works that redeemed a character for Ireland, and have so largely promoted the truest welfare of human-kind. We had not seen her for some years—except for a few brief moments—and rejoiced to find her in nothing changed; her voice as light and happy, her laughter as full of gentle mirth, her eyes as bright and truthful, and her countenance as expressive of goodness and loving-kindness, as they have ever been.

Edgeworthstown was, and is, a large country mansion, to which additions have been from time to time made, but made judiciously. An avenue of venerable trees leads to it from the public road. It is distant about seven miles from the town of Longford. The only room I need specially refer to is the library; it belonged more peculiarly to Maria, although the general sitting-room of the family. It was the room in which she did nearly all her work; not only that which was to gratify and instruct the world, but that which, in a measure, regulated the household—the domestic duties that were subjects of her continual thought: for the desk at which she usually sat was never without memoranda of matters from which she might have pleaded a right to be held exempt. It is by no means a stately, solitary room, but large, spacious, and lofty, well stored with books, and furnished with suggestive engravings. Seen through the window is the lawn, embellished by groups of trees. If you look at the oblong table in the centre, you will see the rallying-point of the family, who are usually around it, reading, writing, or working; while Miss Edge-

worth, only anxious that the inmates of the house shall each do exactly as he or she pleases, sits in her own peculiar corner on the sofa; a pen, given her by Sir Walter Scott while a guest at Edgeworthstown (in 1825), is placed before her on a little, quaint, unassuming table, constructed, and added to, for convenience. She had a singular power of abstraction, apparently hearing all that was said, and occasionally taking part in the conversation, while pursuing her own occupation, and seemingly attending only to it. In that corner, and on that table, she had written nearly all her works. Now and then she would rise and leave the room, perhaps to procure a toy for one of the children, to mount the ladder and bring down a book that could explain or illustrate some topic on which some one was conversing; immediately she would resume her pen, and continue to write as if the thought had been unbroken for an instant. I expressed to Mrs. Edgeworth surprise at this faculty, so opposed to my own habit. "Maria," she said, "was always the same; her mind was so rightly balanced, everything so honestly weighed, that she suffered no inconvenience from what would disturb and distract an ordinary writer."

She was an early riser, and had much work done before breakfast. Every morning during our stay at Edgeworthstown she had gathered a bouquet of roses, which she placed beside my plate on the table, while she was always careful to refresh the vase that stood in our chamber; and she invariably examined my feet after a walk, to see that damp had not induced danger; popping in and out of our room with some kind inquiry, some thoughtful suggestion, or to show some object that she knew would give pleasure. Maria Edgeworth never seemed weary of thought that could make those about her happy.

A wet day was a "god-send" to us. She would enter

our sitting-room and converse freely of persons whose names are histories; and once she brought us a large box full of letters—her correspondence with many great men and women, extending over more than fifty years, authors, artists, men of science, social reformers, statesmen, of all the countries of Europe, and especially of America, a country of which she spoke and wrote in terms of the highest respect and affection.

Although we had known Miss Edgeworth in London, it will be readily understood how much more to advantage she was seen in her own house; she was the very gentlest of lions, the most unexacting, apparently the least conscious of her right to prominence. In London she did not reject, yet she seemed averse to the homage accorded her. At home she was emphatically at home!

In person she was very small—she was "lost in a crowd!" Her face was pale and thin, her features irregular; they may have been considered plain, even in youth, but her expression was so benevolent, her manners were so perfectly well-bred, partaking of English dignity and Irish frankness, that one never thought of her with reference either to beauty or plainness. She ever occupied, without claiming attention, charming continually by her singularly pleasant voice, while the earnestness and truth that beamed from her bright blue—very blue—eyes increased the value of every word she uttered. She knew how to *listen* as well as to *talk*, and gathered information in a manner highly complimentary to those from whom she sought it; her attention seemed far more the effect of respect than of curiosity. Her sentences were frequently epigrammatic; she more than once suggested to me the story of the good fairy from whose lips dropped diamonds and pearls whenever they were opened. She was ever neat

and particular in her dress, her feet and hands were so delicate and small as to be almost childlike. In a word, Maria Edgeworth was one of those women who do not seem to require beauty.

Miss Edgeworth has been called "cold"; but those who have so deemed her have never seen, as I have, the tears gather in her eyes at a tale of suffering or sorrow, nor heard the genuine, hearty laugh that followed the relation of a pleasant story. Never, so long as I live, can I forget the evenings spent in her library in the midst of a family highly educated and self-thinking, in conversation unrestrained, yet pregnant with instructive thought.

In January 1843 Miss Edgeworth was dangerously ill with a fever. Afterwards she wrote to a friend:

And, now that it is over, I thank God not only for my recovery, but for my illness. In very truth, and without the least exaggeration or affectation or sentiment, I declare that, on the whole, my illness was a source of more pleasure than pain to me, and that I would willingly go through all the fever and weakness to have the delight of the feelings of warm affection, and the consequent unspeakable sensations of gratitude. When I felt that it was more than probable that I should not recover, with a pulse above a hundred and twenty, and at the entrance of my seventy-sixth year, I was not alarmed. I felt ready to rise tranquil from the banquet of life, where I had been a happy guest; I confidently relied on the goodness of my Creator.

MARIA *to* MISS MARGARET RUXTON *at* HYÈRES.

TRIM, *March* 20, 1843.

Thank you, thank you, my dear Margaret, for all your anxiety about me.[1] I am strengthening. We have no news or events; we live very happily here. On Friday last, being St. Patrick's Day, there were great doings here, and not drunken doings, not drowning the shamrock in whisky, but honouring the shamrock with temperance rejoicings and music, that maketh the heart glad without making the head giddy or raising the hand against law or fellow-creatures. Leave was asked by the Temperance Band and company to come into Mr. Butler's lawn to play a tune or two, as they were pleased to express it, for Miss Edgeworth. The gates were thrown open, and in came the band, a brass band, with glittering horns, etc., preceded by Priest Halligan, whom you may recollect, in a blue and white scarf floating graceful, and a standard flag in his hand. A numerous crowd of men, women, and children came flocking after, kept in order by some Temperance Society staff officers with blue ensigns.

I, an invalid, was not permitted to go out to welcome them, but I stood at my own window, which I threw open, and thanked them as loud as I could, and curtseyed as low as my littleness and my weakness would allow, and was bowed to as low as saddle-bow by priests on horseback and musicians and audience on foot: Harriet on the steps welcoming and sympathising with these poor people; and delightful it was to see Mr. Butler bareheaded shaking hands with the priest, who almost threw himself from his horse to give him his hand.

Mr. Tuite, that dear good old gentleman, died a few days

[1] In her severe illness during January.

ago at Sonna, in his ninety-seventh year; his good son, in his note to my mother announcing the event, says, "It is a comfort to think that to the very last he had all the comfort, spiritual and earthly, that he could need or desire."

Miss Bremer, of Stockholm, has published a novel, translated by Mary Howitt, which is one of the most interesting, new, and truly original books I have seen this quarter-century. Its title does not do it justice. *Our Neighbours:* which might lead you to expect a gossiping book, or at best something like *Annals of my Parish—tout au contraire;* it is sketches of family life, a romantic family, admirably drawn—some characters perhaps a little overstrained, but in the convulsions of the overstraining giving evidence of great strength—beg, buy, or borrow it, if you can, and if not, envy us who have it.

Envy us, also, *La Vie du Grand Condé*, written in French, by Lord Mahon, not published, only a hundred copies struck off, and he has honoured me with a present of a copy. Of the style and correctness of the French I am not so presumptuous as to pretend to be a competent judge, but I can say that in reading it I quite forgot it was by an Englishman, and never stopped to consider this or that expression, and I wish, dear Margaret, that you had the satisfaction of reading this most interesting, entertaining book.

Dickens's *America* is a failure; never trouble yourself to read it; nevertheless, though the book is good for little, it gives me the conviction that the man is good for much more than I gave him credit for; a real desire for the improvement of the lower classes, and this reality of *feeling* is, I take it, the secret, joined to his great power of humour, of his ascendant popularity.

To MISS BANNATYNE.

TRIM, *April* 1843.

I am eager, with my own hand, to assure you that I am quite recovered. I have been so nursed and tended by all my friends that I really can think of nothing but myself; nevertheless, I am sometimes able to think of other things and persons. During my convalescence Harriet has read to me many entertaining and interesting books: none to me so interesting, so charming, as the Life and Letters of your countryman, that honour to your country and to all Britain, and to human nature—Francis Horner: a more noble, disinterested character could not be; in the midst of temptations with such firm integrity, in the midst of party spirit as much superior to its influence as mortal man could be! and if sympathy with his friends, and the sense that public men must pull together to effect any purpose may, as Lord Webb Seymour asserts, have swayed Horner, or biased him a little from his original theoretic course, still it never was from any selfish or in the slightest degree corrupt or unworthy motive. I much admire Lord Webb Seymour's letter to Horner, and not less Horner's candid, honest, and temperate answer. What friends he made for himself of the best and most able of the land, not only admired but trusted and consulted by them all, and not only trusted and consulted, but beloved. This book really makes one think better of human nature. Of all his friends I think more highly than I ever thought or knew before I read his letters to them and theirs to him. There never was such a unanimous tribute to integrity in a statesman as was paid to Horner by the British Senate at his death: I remember it at the time, and I am glad to see it recorded in this book. It will waken or keep alive the spirit of public and private virtue in many a youthful mind. I see

with pleasure your father's name in the book, and the names and characters of many of our dear Scotch friends. My head and heart are so full of it that I really know not how to stop in speaking of it.

I am just going to write to Lady Lansdowne how much I was delighted by seeing her and Lord Henry Petty, but especially herself, mentioned exactly in the manner in which I thought of her and of him, when we first became acquainted with them, which was just at the very time of which Mr. Horner speaks. Lady Lansdowne gave me a drawing of Little Bounds, which is now hanging up in our library unfaded. It is a gratification to me to feel that I appreciated both her talents and her character as Horner did, before all the world found out that she was a SUPERIOR person.

My brother Pakenham was delighted with his tour in Scotland, and with his renewal of personal intercourse with his dear Scotch friends: all steady as Scotch friends ever are and kind and warm—the warmth once raised in them never cooling—anthracite coal—layer after layer, hot to the very inside kernel. Pakenham is now in London with my sisters Fanny and Honora—Fanny has wonderfully recovered her health. She has several Scotch friends in London, of whom she is very fond, from Joanna Baillie to her young friends, Mrs. Andrews and her sisters. Mr. Andrews is a very agreeable, sensible, conversable man; I saw something of him when I was last in London, and hope to see more when I return there. If I continue as well as I am now I intend, please GOD, to make my promised visit to London some time this autumn, when the hurly-burly of the fashionable season is over.

While at Trim, Maria received the announcement of her youngest sister Lucy's engagement to Dr. Robinson, which gave her exquisite pleasure: "never," as she wrote at the time, "never was a marriage hailed with more family acclaim of universal joy." The marriage took place on June 8.

MARIA *to* MRS. R. BUTLER.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *August* 1, 1843.

I have just wakened and risen from the sofa rejoicing, like a dwarf, "to run my course." I was put to sleep, not by magnetism, but by the agreeable buzz of dear Pakenham's voice reading out a man's peregrinations from Egypt to Australia—"the way was long, the road was dark," and the reader declares I was asleep before we got to Egypt.

Mr. Maltby *is* wondrous tall, and Pakenham has had the diversion long-looked-for of seeing "Maltby hand Maria in to dinner." Mr. Maltby is a very gentlemanlike man, every inch of him, many as they are, and very conversable —really conversable, he both hears and talks, and follows and leads.

To MRS. BEAUFORT.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Sept.* 14, 1843.

"*Choisissez, mon enfant, mais prenez du veau.*" Choose, my dear Honora, whichever pattern you please, but take this which I enclose. We have had a very pleasant visit to Newcastle, where we met Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton Gray, and I liked both very much. I thought her perfectly

unpretending and unaffected; slight figure, a delicate woman, pretty dark hair and dark eyes, and pleasing expression of countenance. I never should have suspected her of being so learned or so laborious and persevering as she is.

In November 1843 Miss Edgeworth went to London, and spent the winter with her sister Harriet, Mrs. Wilson.

MARIA *to* MRS. R. BUTLER.

NORTH AUDLEY STREET, *Dec.* 3, 1843.

We dined at Dr. Lushington's last Thursday — the dinner was very merry and good-humoured. Mr. Richardson was there, and delighted I was to see him, and he talked so affectionately of Sir Walter and auld lang syne times; and Mr. Bentham, the botanist, too, was there, Pakenham's friend, a very agreeable man. After dinner too was to me very entertaining, for I found that a lady, introduced to me as Mrs. Hawse, was daughter to Brunel, and she told me all the truth of her brother and the half-guinea in his throat, and the incision in his windpipe, and his coughing it up at last, and Brodie seeing and snatching it from between his teeth, and driving over all London to show it.

And now we are going to tea at Dr. Holland's.

Monday morning.

That we had a very pleasant evening I need scarcely say, but to Boswell Sydney Smith would out-Boswell Boswell. He talked of course of Ireland and the Priests, and I gave

good, and I trust true testimony to their being, before they took to politics—excellent parish priests, and he talked of Bishop Higgins and Repeal agitations, and I told him of "Don't be anticipating," and laughing at brogue (how easy!) led him to tell me of a conversation of his with Bishop Doyle in former days—beginning with "My lord," propitiously and propitiatingly, "My lord, don't you think it would be a good plan to have your clergy paid by the State?"

Bishop Doyle assured him it would never be accepted.

"But, suppose every one of your clergy found £150 lodged in the bank for them, and at 5 per cent for arrears?"

"Ah! Mr. Smith, you have a way of putting things!"

Sydney Smith, on his side, was enchanted with Maria Edgeworth—"Miss Edgeworth was delightful, so clever and sensible. She does not say witty things, but there is such a perfume of wit runs through all her conversation as makes it very brilliant."

MISS EDGEWORTH *to* MRS. R. BUTLER.

Christmas Day.

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

With the addition which Lestock has just been telling to Waller—

With your pockets full of money and your cellars full of beer.

Yesterday, Sunday, your kind friends, the Andrews', took Waller with us to the Temple church—it has been, you know, all new painted and dressed since I saw it last,

and the knights in dark bronze-coloured marble repaired. The tiled floor is too new, not like Mr. Butler's most respectable reverend old tiles. Mr. Andrews took us all over the church after service, and in particular pointed out one old window of painted glass, in which the bright red colour is so bright in such full freshness as is inimitable in modern art.

We went from church to luncheon at Mrs. Andrews', and such a luncheon; I refrain from a whole page which might be spent on it. Then Mrs. Andrews took Waller and me a drive three times round the park, a most pleasant drive in such a bright sunshiny day. So many happy little children under the trees and on the pathways.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET, *Jan.* 1844.

Thank you, and pray do you thank for me all the dear kind brothers, sisters, nephews, and nieces, all round you, their centre and spring of good, for all the pleasure they, on my seventy-seventh birthday, from Barry's to dear little Mary's, all gave me—pleasure such as cannot be bought for money. Who would not like to live to be old if they could be so happy in friends as I am? I cannot help enclosing to you Lucy's and Dr. Robinson's greeting, as you will feel with me the pleasure both gave me.

Dumb Francis was here on that happy first of January and assured me on his slate that he was very happy and grateful. I never see him without my Francis's sonnet repeating itself, "The soul of honour," etc.

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET, *Jan.* 5, 1844.

I have been reading and am reading Bentham's *Memoirs;* he could write plain English before he invented

his strange lingo, and the account of his childhood and youth is exceedingly entertaining. Fanny reads to us at night, much to Waller's interest and entertainment, Lieutenant Eyre's account of that horrid Cabul expedition—what a disgrace to the British arms and name in India. Mr. Pakenham and his nice wife came in while I was writing this, and when I asked him if the prestige of British superiority would be destroyed in India, he said, "No: we have redeemed ourselves so nobly."

Waller is occupied every spare moment perfecting a Leyden phial, coated and chained properly, and giving quite large and grand sparks and pretty sharp shocks.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET, *Jan.* 1844.

The day before yesterday Fanny and I walked to see Mrs. Napier, all in black for Lady Clare—the suddenness of whose death, scarcely a moment's interval between the bright flash of life and the dark silence of death, was most striking and awful.

Yesterday we went to see dear Lady Elizabeth Whitbread, all as it used to be, beautiful camellias, but she herself so sad—Miss Grant is dying. Nothing can surpass her true tenderness to this faithful, gentle, sincere old friend. All these illnesses and deaths are the more striking I think in a bustling capital city, than they would be in the country surrounded by one's family. There is something shocking in seeing the bustling, struggling crowd who care nothing for one another dead or alive: and they may say, so much the better, we are spared unavailing thought and anguish, and yet I would rather have the thought and even the anguish—for without pain there is no pleasure for the heart

no prayer for Indifference for me! Every *memento mori* comes with some force to me at seventy-seven, and I do pray most earnestly and devoutly to GOD, as my father did before me, that my body may not survive my mind, and that I may leave a tender not unpleasing recollection in their hearts.

Though I have written this, my dear mother, and feel it truly, I am not the least melancholy, or apprehensive or afraid of dying, and as to the rest I am truly resigned, and trust to the goodness of my Creator living or dying.

Jan. 13.

Thursday evening at Rogers's—the party was made for us and as small as possible, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, Lady Davy, Mr. and Mrs. Empson, and Mr. Compton and Lord Northampton. Mr. Empson is very little altered in twelve years: the same affectionate heart and the same excellent head. Lord Northampton is very conversable; and Mr. Compton brought me sugared words from troops of children.

HALF-PAST SIX P.M.

Just returned from Mrs. Drummond's—beautiful house and two pretty children—and we went to see Anna Carr's beautiful drawings of Ceylon, and no time for more.

Feb. 1.

Miss Fox's illness detained Lord and Lady Lansdowne at Bowood—she is rather better. We went to Lansdowne House yesterday, and saw Lady Shelburne for the first time, handsome, and very amiable in countenance. Lady Louisa was most charming in her attention to me, and she has a most sensible, deep-thinking face.

Feb. 2.

Snowing and fogging, as white and as dark and disagreeable as ever it can be. Thank heaven, to-day was not yesterday, which was dry, bright sunshine, on purpose to grace the Queen, and to pleasure us three in particular. Fanny ended yesterday by telling you how fortunate, or rather how kind, people had been in working out three tickets for me, at the last hour, at the last moment; for Lord Lovelace came himself between eleven and twelve at night with a ticket, which he gave me, at Lady Byron's request. You may guess how happy I was to have the third ticket for Honora, and we were all full dressed, punctual to the minute, in Fanny's carriage, and with my new-dressed opossum cloak covering our knees, as warm as young toasts.

I spare you all that you will see in the newspapers. The first view of the House did not strike me as so grand as the old House, but my mouth was stopped by "*Pro tempore* only, you know." We went up an ignominiously small staircase, and the man at the bottom, piteously perspiring, cried out, "On, on, ladies! don't stop the way! room enough above!" But there was one objection to going on, that there were no seats above: however, we made ourselves small—no great difficulty—and, taking to the wall, we left a scarcely practicable pass for those who, less wary and more obedient than ourselves, went up one by one to the highmost void. Fanny feared for me that I should never be able to *stand* it, when somehow or another my name was pronounced and heard by one of the Miss Southebys, who stretched her cordial hand. "Glad—proud—glad—we'll squeeze—we'll make room for you between me and my friend Miss Fitzhugh;" and so I was bodkin, but never touched the bench till

long after. I cast a lingering look at my deserted sisters twain. "No, no, we can't do that!" so, that hope killed off, I took to make the best of my own selfish position, and surveyed all beneath me, from the black heads of the reporter gentlemen, with their pencils and papers before them in the form and desk immediately below me, to the depths of the hall, in all its long extent; and sprawling and stretching in the midst—with the feathered and lappeted and jewelled peeresses on their right, and their foreign excellencies on the left—were the long-robed, ermined judges, laying their wigs together and shaking hands, their wigs' many-curled tails shaking on their backs. And the wigs jointly and severally looked like so many vast white and gray birds'-nests from Brobdingnag, with a black hole at the top of each, for the birds to creep out or in. More and more scarlet-ermined dignitaries and nobles swarmed into the hall, and then, in at the scarlet door, came, with white ribbon shoulder-knots and streamers flying in all directions, a broad scarlet five-row-ermined figure, with high, bald forehead, facetious face, and jovial, hail-fellow-well-met countenance, princely withal, H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, and the sidelong peeress benches stretched their fair hands, and he his ungloved royal hand hastily here and there and everywhere, and chattering so loud and long, that even the remote gallery could hear the "Ha, ha, haw!" which followed ever and anon; and we blessed ourselves, and thought we should never hear the Queen; but I was told he would be silent when the Queen came, and so it proved.

The guns were heard: once, twice, and at the second all were silent: even His Royal Highness of Cambridge ceased to rustle and flutter, and stood nobly still.

Enter the crown and cushion and sword of state and

mace—the Queen, leaning on Prince Albert's arm. She did not go up the steps to the throne well—caught her foot and stumbled against the edge of the footstool, which was too high. She did not seat herself in a decided, queenlike manner, and after sitting down pottered too much with her drapery, arranging her petticoats. That footstool was much too high! her knees were crumpled up, and her figure, short enough already, was foreshortened as she sat, and her drapery did not come to the edge of the stool: as my neighbour Miss Fitzhugh whispered, "Bad effect." However and nevertheless, the better half of her looked perfectly ladylike and queenlike; her head finely shaped, and well held on her shoulders with her likeness of a kingly crown, that diadem of diamonds. Beautifully fair the neck and arms; and the arms moved gracefully, and never too much. I could not at that distance judge of her countenance, but I heard people on the bench near me saying that she looked "divinely gracious."

Dead silence: more of majesty implied in that silence than in all the magnificence around. She spoke, low and well: "My lords and gentlemen, be seated." Then she received from the lord-in-waiting her speech, and read: her voice, perfectly distinct and clear, was heard by us ultimate auditors; it was not quite so fine a voice as I had been taught to expect; it had not the full rich tones nor the varied powers and inflections of a perfect voice. She read with good sense, as if she perfectly understood, but did not fully or warmly feel, what she was reading. It was more a girl's well-read lesson than a Queen pronouncing her speech. She did not lay emphasis sufficient to mark the gradations of importance in the subjects, and she did not make pauses enough. The best-pronounced paragraphs were those about France and Ireland, her firm

determination to preserve inviolate the legislative union; and "I am resolved to act in strict conformity with this declaration" she pronounced strongly and well. She showed less confidence in reading about the suspension of the elective franchise, and in the conclusion, emphasis and soul were wanting, when they were called for, when she said, "In full confidence of your loyalty and wisdom, and with an earnest prayer to Almighty GOD," etc.

Her Majesty's exit I was much pleased to look at, it was so graceful and so gracious. She took time enough for all her motions, noticing all properly, from "my dear uncle"—words I distinctly heard as she passed the Duke of Cambridge—to the last expectant fair one at the doorway. The Queen vanished: buzz, noise, the clatter rose, and all were in commotion, and the tide of scarlet and ermine flowed and ebbed; and after an immense time the throngs of people bonneted and shawled, came forth from all the side niches and windows, and down from the upper galleries, and then places unknown gave up their occupants, and all the outward halls were filled with the living mass: as we looked down upon them from the back antechamber, one sea of heads. We sat down on a side seat with Mrs. Hamilton Grey and her sister, and we made ourselves happy criticising or eulogising all that passed down the centre aisle: not the least chance of getting to our carriage for an hour to come. One of the blue and silver officials of the House, at a turn in one of the passages, had loudly pronounced, pointing, rod in hand, to an outer vestibule and steps, "All who are not waiting for carriages, this way, be pleased;" and vast numbers, ill pleased, were forced to make their exit. We went farther and fared worse. While we were waiting in purgatory, several angelic wigs passed that way who noticed me, most solemnly, albeit cordially:

my Lord Chief Justice Tindal, Baron Alderson, Mr. Justice Erskine, the Bishop of London—very warm indeed; had never cooled since I had met him the night before at Sir Robert Inglis's.

Harriet de Salis, very well dressed and very unaffected and warm-hearted, actually left her chaperon, and sat down on the steps, and talked and laughed the heart's laugh. Honora and Fanny had gone on a voyage of discovery through the sea of heads, and had found that most excellent and sensible John stuck close to the door; but as to getting the carriage up, impracticable. We had only to wait and be ready instantly, as it would have to drive off as soon as called. Workmen, bawling to one another, were hauling and hoisting out all the peeresses' benches, stripped of their scarlet; and the short and the very long of it is that we did at last hear "Mrs. Wilson's carriage," and in we ran, and took Mrs. Hamilton Grey in too: Fanny sat on Honora's lap, and all was right and happy; and even little I not at all tired.

When I had got thus far, Sir Thomas Acland came in; I had met him at Sir Robert Inglis's. He was full of Edgeworthstown and your kindness to him, my dear mother. He repeated to me all the good advice he received from you forty years ago, and says that you made him see Ireland, and have common-sense. You put him in the way, and he has made his way. He is very good, very enthusiastic, and wonderfully fond of me and of *Castle Rackrent*.

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

WARFIELD LODGE, *April* 3, 1844.

I am so glad I came here, and I am so glad I have my own dear Fanny with me; and she was rewarded for coming

by Miss O'Beirne's most cordial reception of her; so kindly well-bred. Dear Miss Wren! for dear she has always been to me for her own merits, which are great, and from her perfect love for Mrs. O'Beirne, in which I sympathise.

I am as well as I am happy, and not the least tired, thank you, my dear ma'am, after having seen and heard and done enough yesterday morning to have tired a young body of seventeen, instead of one in her seventy-eighth year.

We went a charming drive through this smiling, well-wooded, well-cottaged country, to the Malcolms: met Colonel Malcolm and his eldest sister Olympia on horseback at the door, just returned from their ride, and straight Fanny fell in love with Olympia's horse—"such a beautiful animal!" But I care much more for the Colonel! charming indeed, unaffected, polite, and kind. Never had I so kind a reception! and if I were to give you a *catalogue raisonnée* of all we saw in their rich and rare, as well as happy home, it would reach from this to Trim.

To MRS. EDGEWORTH.

COLLINGWOOD, *April* 8, 1844.

Fine sunshiny day, and from my window I see a beautiful lawn, and two children rolling on the grass, and I hear their happy voices and their father's with them. I should have told you that on Friday Lestock took me and Emmeline, and Emmeline Gibbons and her little girl, to the Zoological Gardens, and we all were mightily delighted; but of the beasts and birds when I return.

Here are Lord and Lady Adair—she is grateful to Sophy Palmer for her kindness when she was ill at Oxford—and Sir Edward Ryan, and one whom I was right glad to meet, "Jones on Rent;" and I have attacked, plagued, and

gratified him by urging him to write a new volume. Jones and Herschel are very fond of one another, often differing, but always agreeing to differ, like Malthus and Ricardo, who hunted together in search of Truth, and huzzaed when they found her, without caring who found her first: indeed, I have seen them both put their able hands to the windlass to drag her up from the bottom of that well in which she so strangely delights to dwell.

I must go back to the 23rd, which was a full and well-filled day. In the morning Rogers kindly determined to catch us: came before luncheon-time, and was very agreeable and very good-natured about a drawing I showed to him by a niece of Mrs. Holland's, a young girl of fifteen, who has really an inventive genius. I suggested to her, among the poems it is now the fashion to illustrate, Parnell's fairy tale: she has sketched the first scene—the old castle, lighted up: fairies dancing in the hall: Edwin crouching in the corner. Rogers praised it so warmly, that I regretted the girl could not hear him; it would so encourage her. He got up, dear, good-natured old man, from his chair as I spoke, and went immediately to Lower Brook Street with the drawing to the young lady.

Luncheon over, we drove to the city, to see an old gentleman of ninety-three, Mr. Vaughan, whom I am sure you remember so kindly showing the London Docks to us in 1813, with his understanding and all his faculties as clear and as fresh now as they were then; and, after returning from Mr. Vaughan's, we went to the bazaar, where I wanted to buy a churn, and other toys that shall be nameless, for the children; and after all this I lay down and slept for three-quarters of an hour, before time to dress for dinner. This dinner was at Lambeth: arrived exactly in time: found Mrs. Howley ready in her beautiful drawing-room, and I

had the pleasure of five minutes' conversation alone with her. Oddly, it came out that she had a fine picture in the room, given to her by Mr. Legge, who inherited Aston Hall, which Mr. Legge I used to hear of continually ages ago as a sort of bugbear, being the heir-at-law to Sir Thomas Holte and Lady Holte's property. "Very natural they could never bear the name of Legge," said Mrs. Howley, "but he was my relative and excellent friend;" and she pointed to an inscription in grateful honour of him under the picture. How oddly connections come out, and between people one should never have thought had heard of each other, and at such distant times.

This dinner and evening at Lambeth proved very agreeable to me. At the dinner were Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton Grey, Dean Milman, the Bishop of Lichfield, Sir Thomas Sinclair, and some others whose names I do not remember —fourteen altogether. I was on the Archbishop's right hand, Mrs. Hamilton Grey on his left. Dear, simple, dignified, yet playful Archbishop, who talked well of all things, from nursery rhymes to deep metaphysics and physics. Apropos to dreams and acting in character in the strangest circumstances, I mentioned Dr. Holland's *Medical Notes*, and the admirable chapter on Reverie and Dreaming. He had not seen the book, but seemed interested, and said he would read it directly—a great pleasure to me (goose!). I must not go further into the conversation with Milman, and the Archbishop's remarks upon Coleridge; it was all very agreeable, and—early hours being the order of the day and night there—I came away at ten; and as I drew up the glass, and was about to draw up Steele's opossum cloak, I felt a slight resistance—Fanny! dear, kind Fanny, so unexpected, come in the carriage for me; and a most delightful drive we had home.

1 NORTH AUDLEY STREET, *April* 15.

"Slip on, for Time's Time!" said a man, coming forth with a pipe in his mouth from an inn door, exhorting men and horses of railroad omnibus. "Slip on, Time's Time!" I have been saying to myself continually; and now I am coming to the last gasp, and Time slips so fast, that Time is not Time—in fact, there's no Time.

Rosa's note to Fanny about glass shall be attended to, and I shall paste on the outside, "GLASS—NOT TO BE THROWN DOWN;" for Lord Adair had a bag thrown down the other day by reckless railway porters, in which was a bottle of sulphuric acid, which, breaking and spilling, stained, spoiled, and burned his Lordship's best pantaloons. I have packed up my bottles with such elastic skill, that I trust my petticoats will not share that sad fate.

Miss Edgeworth now left London for the last time. This was her last visit to her happy London home in North Audley Street, and in this last visit she had enjoyed much with all the freshness of youth, though the health of her sister and hostess often caused her anxiety. Mrs. L. H. Sigourney, who had been a frequent visitor, writes:[1]

To have repeatedly met and listened to Miss Edgeworth, seated familiarly with her by the fireside, may seem to her admirers in America a sufficient payment for the hazards of crossing the Atlantic. Her conversation, like

[1] *Pleasant Memories of Pleasant Lands*, by Mrs. L. H. Sigourney (1791-1865).

her writings, is varied, vivacious, and delightful. Her forgetfulness of self and happiness in making others happy are marked traits in her character. Her person is small and delicately proportioned, and her movements full of animation. The ill-health of the lovely sister, much younger than herself, at whose house in London she was passing the winter, called forth such deep anxiety, untiring attention, and fervent gratitude for every favourable symptom, as seemed to blend features of maternal tenderness with sisterly affection.

MARIA *to* MRS. R. BUTLER.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *May* 2, 1844.

Not the least tired with my journey. Francis read to me indefatigably through *Australia*.[1] There is an excellent anecdote of an old Scotch servant meeting his master unexpectedly in Australia after many years' absence: "I was quite dung down donnerit when I saw the laird, I canna' conceit what dooned me—I was raal glad to see him, but I dinna ken hoo I couldna' speak it."

If anybody can conceive anything much more absurd than my copying this out of a printed book of your own which you will have back in seven days,—let them call aloud.

"I canna' speak it" how happy I was yesterday, at the tender, warm reception I had from your dear mother, and all young and old.

To MISS MARGARET RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Aug.* 21, 1844.

I am right glad to look forward to the hope of seeing you again and talking all manner of nonsense and sense,

[1] Hood's *Letters from Australia*.

and laughing myself and making you laugh, as I used to do, though I am six years beyond the allotted age and have had so many attacks of illness within the last two years; but I am, as Bess Fitzherbert and poor dear Sophy used to say, like one of those pith puppets that you knock down in vain, they always start up the same as ever. I was particularly fortunate in my last attack of erysipelas in all the circumstances, just having reached Harriet and Louisa's comfortable home, and happy in having Harriet Butler coming to me the very day she heard I was in this condition. Crampton had set out for Italy the day before, but Sir Henry Marsh managed me with skill, and let me recover slowly, as nature requires at advanced age. I am obliged to repeat to myself, "advanced age," because really and truly neither my spirits nor my powers of locomotion and facility of running up and down stairs would put me in mind of it. I do not find either my love for my friends or my love of literature in the least failing. I enjoyed even when flattest in my bed hearing Harriet Butler reading to me till eleven o'clock at night. Sir Henry Marsh prescribed some book that would entertain and interest me without straining my attention or over-exciting me, and Harriet chose Madame de Sevigné's *Letters*, which perfectly answered all the conditions, and was as delightful at the twentieth reading as at the first. Such lively pictures of the times and modes of living in country, town, and court, so interesting from their truth, simplicity, and elegance; the language so polished, and not the least antiquated even at this day. Madame de Sevigné's reply to Madame de Grignan, having called Les Rochers "*humide*"—"*Humide! humide vous-même!*" I should not have thought it French; I did not know they had that turn of colloquial drollery. But she has every good turn and power of expression, and

is such an amiable, affectionate, good creature, loving the world too and the court, and all its sense and nonsense mixed delightfully. Harriet often stopped to say, "How like my mother! how like Aunt Ruxton!" At Trim, during the two delightfully happy months I was there, during my convalescence and perfect recovery, she read to me many other books, and often I wished that you had been as you used to be with us, and Mr. Butler, who is very fond of you and appreciates you, joined in the wish. One book was the *Journal of the Nemesis*, — of breathless interest, from the great danger they were in from the splitting of the iron vessel, and all the exertions and ingenuity of the officers; and Prescott's *Mexico* I found extremely interesting. After these true, or warranted true histories, we read a novel not half so romantic or entertaining, the *Widow Barnaby in America*, and then we tried a Swedish story,— not by Miss Bremer,— of smugglers and murderers, and a self-devoted lady, and an idiot boy, the best drawn and most consistent character in the book. After — no, I believe it was before—the *Rose of Tisleton*, we read *Ellen Middleton*, by Lady Georgiana Fullerton, grand-daughter of the famous Duchess-Beauty of Devonshire, and whatever faults that Duchess had she certainly had genius. Do you recollect her lines on *William Tell*? or do you know Coleridge's lines to her, beginning with

> O lady nursed in pomp and pleasure,
> Where learned you that heroic measure?

Look for them, and get *Ellen Middleton*, it is well worth your reading. Lady Georgiana certainly inherits her grandmother's genius, and there is a high-toned morality and religious principle through the book (where got she "that heroic measure"?) without any cant or ostentation:

it is the same moral I intended in *Helen*, but exemplified in much deeper and stronger colours. This is—but you must read it yourself.

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

OBSERVATORY, ARMAGH, *Sept.* 15, 1844.

As well and as happy as the day is short—too short here for all that is to be seen, felt, heard, and understood. It is more delightful to me than I can express, but you can understand how delightful it is to see Lucy so happy and to see her mother see it all. I sleep in the same room with her, and fine talking we have, and we care not who hears us, we say no harm of anybody, we have none to say.

Lucy has certainly made good use of her time and so improved the house I should hardly have known it. In the dining-room is a fine picture of Dr. Robinson when a boy, full of genius and romance, seated on a rock. It is admirable and delicious to see how well and how completely Lucy has turned her mind to all that can make her house and *houseband*, and all belonging to him, happy and comfortable—omitting none of those smaller creature comforts which, if not essential, are very desirable for all human creatures learned or unlearned.

Robinson at home is not less wonderful and more agreeable even than Robinson abroad,—his *abondance* in literature equal to Macintosh,—in science you know out of sight superior to anybody. In home life his amiable qualities and amicable temper appear to the greatest advantage, and I cannot say too much about the young people's kind and affectionate manner to Lucy.

The Primate[1] and the Lady Beresfords were so kind and

[1] Lord John George Beresford, Archbishop of Armagh.

gracious as to come to see us; and I have enjoyed a very agreeable luncheon-dinner at Caledon. Lady Caledon is a *real* person, doing a great deal of good sensibly. Lord Caledon[1] gave me a history of his life in the backwoods of America, and gave me a piece of pemmican, and I enclose a bit, and I hope it will not have greased everything! and when I said that after a youth in the backwoods it was well to have such a place as Caledon to fall back upon, there was a glance at his mother that spoke volumes.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Aug.* 7, 1845.

How characteristic Joanna Baillie's letter is, so perfectly simple, dignified, and touching.

To MISS MARGARET RUXTON.

August 7, 1845.

No pen or hand but my own shall answer your most affectionate letter, my dear own Margaret, or welcome you again to your native country—damp as it is—warm and comfortable with good old,—and young, friends—and young, for your young friends Mary Anne and Charlotte were heartily glad to see you. As to the old, I will yield to no mortal living. In the first place is the plain immovable fact that I am the OLDEST friend you have living, and as to actual knowledge of you I defy any one to match me, ever since you were an infant at Foxhall, and through the Black Castle cottage times with dear Sophy and all. What changes and chances, and ups and downs, we have seen together!

[1] James Du Pre, third Earl of Caledon, was then unmarried. His mother, Catherine, daughter of the third Earl of Hardwicke, lived with him when he was in Ireland.

To MISS MARGARET RUXTON.

TRIM, *March* 1, 1846.

Pakenham and Christina[1] arrived here in excellent time, charmed with their kind reception at Black Castle. From the first moment I set eyes and ears upon Christina I liked her,—it seemed to me as if she was not a new bride coming a stranger amongst us, but one of the family fitting at once into her place as a part of a joining map that had been wanting and is now happily found.

To LADY BEAUFORT.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *May* 31, 1846.

I hope, dear Honora, that the rhododendrons will not exhaust themselves; at this moment yours opposite the library window are in the most beautiful profuse blow you can conceive, and at the end of my garden indescribably beautiful, and scarlet thorn beside. The peony tree has happily survived its removal, and is covered with flowers.

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *June* 24, 1846.

I must try your patience a bit more in a most *thorny* affair——How "thorny"?

You will never know till a box arrives by the coach, Edward being under orders to convey it to Granard in the gig. Why Edward? Why in the gig? Because the box is too heavy for Mick Dolan or any other gossoon to carry. "And what can be in it?" Wait till you see,—and I hope you may only see and not feel. *Citoyenne, n'y touchez pas.* Vegetable, animal, or mineral? Four-and-twenty

[1] In February, Pakenham Edgeworth had married Christina, daughter of Dr. Hugh Macpherson of Aberdeen.

questions might be spent upon it, and you would be none the wiser.

Now to be plain, the box contains "the old man's head;" now you know. Cacti sent to me by Sir William Hooker; your mother has not room for more than two, which she kept. Thunderstorm and hail-shower, half-past eleven.

The death of Maria Edgeworth's half-brother Francis on 12th October 1846 was a great grief to the family. The same autumn saw the beginning of the Irish famine.

MARIA *to* MRS. R. BUTLER.

February 9, 1847.

Mr. Powell instigated me to beg some relief for the poor from the Quaker Association in Dublin—so, much against the grain, I penned a letter to Mr. Harvey, the only person whose name I know on the committee, and prayed some assistance for Mr. Powell, our vicar, to get us over the next two months, and your mother represented to me that men and boys who can get employment in draining especially, cannot *stand* the work in the wet for want of strong shoes; so, in for a penny, in for a pound; ask for a lamb, ask for a sheep. I made *bould* to axe my FRIENDS for as many pairs of brogues as they could afford, or as much leather and soles, which would be better still, as this would enable us to set sundry starving shoemakers to work. By return of post came a letter to "Most respected Friend," or something better, I forget what, and I have sent the letter to Fanny—granting £30 for food—offering a soup boiler

for eighty gallons, if we had not one large enough, and sending £10 for women's work: and telling me they would lay my shoe petition before the Clothing Committee.[1]

February 22.

The people are now beginning to sow, and I hope they will accordingly reap in due course. Mr. Hinds has laid down a good rule, not to give seed to any tenants but those who can produce the receipt for the last half-year's rent. Barry has been exceedingly kind in staying with us, doing your mother all manner of good, looking after blunders in draining, etc.

March 13.

I have been working as hard as an ass to get the pleasure of writing to you, and have not been able to accomplish it. I have only time to say, a gentleman from the Birmingham Relief Committee has sent me £5 for the starving Irish. How good people are! I send Mrs. Cruger's letter, and have written to the ladies of America, specially, as she desires, to those of New York, and your mother approved, and I asked for barley seed, which, as Mr. Powell and Gahan and your mother say, to be of any use must come before May—but I asked for money as well as seed.—Sturdy beggars.

March 22.

You will see how good the Irish Americans[2] have been, and are; I wish the rich Argosie was come.

[1] Leather was sent by these benevolent gentlemen, and brogues were made for men and boys, and proved to be of the first service.

[2] The Irish porters who carried the seed corn sent from Philadelphia to the shore for embarkation refused to be paid.

April 9.

"Où peut-on être mieux qu'au sein de sa famille?" I found it, my dear, exactly where I knew it was, in Alison's *History*. On Buonaparte's return from Egypt, the Old Guard surrounding him and the band playing this. I know Mary Anne and Charlotte have the music. I have seen it with my eyes and heard it with my ears; I have it in the memory of my heart—I have made all the use I want of it now in the new story I am writing, and mean to publish in Chambers's *Miscellany*, and to give the proceeds to the Poor Relief Fund.

April 26.

Having seen in the newspapers that the Australians had sent a considerable sum for the relief of the distressed Irish, and that they had directed it to the care of "His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin," meaning Dr. Murray, I wrote to our Archbishop Whately, playing upon this graceless proceeding towards him, and to the best of my capacity, without flattery. I did what I could to make my letter honestly pleasing to His Grace, and I received the most prompt, polite, and to the point reply, assuring me that the Australians were not so graceless in their doings as in their words, that they had made a remittance of a considerable sum to him, and that if I apply to the Central Relief Committee, in whose hands he placed it, he has no doubt my application will be attended to.

This was nuts and apples to me, or, better at present, rice and oatmeal, and I have accordingly written to "My Lords and Gentlemen." The Archbishop, civilly, to show how valuable he deemed my approbation! has sent me a corrected copy of his speech, with good new notes and protest and preface. He says it is impossible to conceive

how ignorant the English still are of Ireland, and how positive in their ignorance.

April 28.

Mr. Powell has received from Government £105 on his sending up the list of subscriptions here for a hundred guineas, according to their promise, to give as much as any parish subscribed towards its own relief. This he means to lay out in bread and rice and meal—not all in soup; that he may encourage them to cook at home and not be mere craving beggars.

To LADY BEAUFORT.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *May* 8, 1847.

Most heartily do I rejoice that we may hope that you may be able to come; I do not say come with Fanny, for that might hurry and hazard you, but in the days of harvest home, if harvest home does ever come again to our poor country, and you will rejoice with us in the brightened day.

I cannot answer your Admiral's question as to the number of deaths caused by the famine. I believe that no one can form a just estimate. In different districts the estimates and assertions are widely different, and the priests keep no registry. Mr. Tuite, who was here yesterday, told us that in the House of Commons the contradictory statements of the Irish members astonished and grieved him, as he knew the bad effect it would have in diminishing their credit with the English. Two hundred and fifty thousand is the report of the Police up to April. Mr. Tuite thought a third more deaths than usual had been in his neighbourhood. My mother and Mr. Powell say that the increase of deaths above ordinary times has not in this parish been as much as one-third.

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *May* 19, 1847.

The fever, or whatever it is, has been, Lucy says, dreadful about Armagh; many gentlemen have it; one who exerted himself much for the poor—was distributing meal, saw a poor girl so weak, she could not hold her apron stretched out for it; he went and held it for her—she was in the fever; he went home, felt ill, had the fever, and died.

June 7.

What magnificent convolvulus! we had not one blown for Fanny's birthday. Do not trouble yourself about my cough or cold, for I am doing, and shall do, very well; and I would have had twenty times the cough for the really exquisite pleasure I have received from Sir Henry Marsh's letter: no such generous offer was ever made with more politeness and good taste. In the midst of all that may go wrong in the world there is really *much good*, and so much that is honourable to our human nature.

When Margaret is with you, if she likes to see *Orlandino* in his present *déshabillé*, she is welcome.[1]

June 11.

I am quite well, and half-eaten by midges, which proves that I have been out, standing over Mackin, cutting away dead branches of laurestinus. He could not stand it—took off hat, and rubbed with both hands all over head and face.

[1] This story was the first of a series edited by William Chambers. It was practically "a temperance story." Speaking in it of the influence of Father Matthews, Miss Edgeworth says: "Since the time of the Crusades, never has one single voice awakened such moral energies; never was the call of one man so universally, so promptly, so long obeyed. Never, since the world began, were countless multitudes so influenced and so successfully diverted by one mind to one peaceful purpose. Never were nobler ends by nobler means attained."

I wish we could put back the profuse blow of the rhododendrons, peonies, and Himalayan poppies till Honora and Fanny come. Have you any Himalayan poppies? If not, remember to supply yourself when you are here—splendid!

Of the publication of *Orlandino*, written for the benefit of the Irish Poor Relief Fund, Miss Edgeworth wrote to Mrs. S. C. Hall:

Chambers, as you always told me, acts very liberally. As this was to earn a little money for our parish poor, in the last year's distress, he most considerately gave prompt payment. Even before publication, when the proof-sheets were under correction, came the ready order in the Bank of Ireland. Blessings on him! and I hope he will not be the worse for me. I am surely the better for him, and so are numbers now working and eating; for Mrs. Edgeworth's principle and mine is to excite the people to work for good wages, and not, by gratis feeding, to make beggars of them, and ungrateful beggars, as the case might be.

A most touching reward for her exertions in behalf of the Irish poor, reached Miss Edgeworth from America. The children of Boston, who had known and loved her through her books, raised a subscription for her, and sent her a hundred and fifty pounds of flour and rice. They were simply inscribed—"To Miss Edgeworth, for her poor." Nothing, in her long life, ever pleased or gratified her more.

MARIA EDGEWORTH *to* MISS MARGARET RUXTON.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Oct.* 27, 1847.

I have heard it said that no one should begin a letter with *I*, but methinks this must be the dictum of some hypocritical body, or of somebody who thinks more of themselves than they dare let appear. I am so full of my own little self, that I am confident you, my dear Margaret, will not think the worse of me for beginning with "I am very well;" and I am a miracle of prudence and a model of virtue to sick and well—with good looking-after understood. So I stayed in bed yesterday morning, and roses and myrtles and white satin ribbon covered my bed, to tie up a bouquet for a bride, very well wrapped up in my labada. You don't know what a labada is: Harriet will tell you. This nosegay was to be presented to the bride by little Mary, as Rosa was asked to the wedding, and was to take Mary with her. But who is the bride? you will ask, and ask you may; but you will not be a bit the wiser when I tell you—Miss Thompson. Now your heads go to Clonfin, or to Thompsons near Dublin, or in the County of Meath. This is one you never heard of—at Mr. Armstrong's, of Moydow; and she was married yesterday to the eldest son of Baron Greene.

At the breakfast, when Mr. Armstrong was to reply to the speech of the bridegroom, who had expressed his gratitude to him as the uncle who had brought her up, the old man attempted to speak; but when he rose he could only pronounce the words, "My child."

Mary, after the breakfast, walked gracefully up to the bride and said, "My Aunt Maria begged me to present this to you. The rose is called Maria Leonida, her own name is Maria; and she hopes you will be very happy." I was delighted.

To MRS. R. BUTLER.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *Oct.* 30, 1847.

I hope the hyacinths "Maria Edgeworth" and "Apollo," and all the blues, will not be destroyed in their journey to you. I spent an hour yesterday doing up dahlias for Rosa, who wrote to me from Dublin that she was heart-sick for flowers.

I advise and earnestly recommend you to read *Grantley Manor*. It does not, Mr. Butler, end ill, and from beginning to end it is good, and not stupidly good. It is not controversial either in dialogue or story, and in word and deed it does justice to both Churches, in the distribution of the qualities of the *dramatis personæ* and the action of the story. It is beautifully written; pathetic, without the least exaggeration of feeling or affectation. The characters are well contrasted; some nobly high-minded, generous, and firm to principle, religious and moral without any cant; and there are no monsters of wickedness. I never read a more interesting story, new, and well developed.

Nov. 13.

Yesterday morning I received the enclosed note from that most conceited and not over well-bred Mons. de Lamartine. I desired my friend Madame Belloc to use her own discretion in repeating my criticisms on his *Histoire des Girondins*, but requested that she would convey to him the thanks and admiration of our family for the manner in which he has mentioned the Abbé Edgeworth, and our admiration of the beauty of the writing of that whole passage in the work. At the same time I regretted that he had omitted "Fils de St. Louis," and also that he has not mentioned the circumstance of the

crowd opening and letting the Abbé pass in safety immediately from the scaffold after the execution. This it seems to me necessary to note, as part of the picture of the times: a few days afterwards a price was set upon his head, and hundreds were ready for the reward to pursue and give him up. I copied this from Sneyd's *Memoir*, and the anecdote of the Abbé, when asked at a dinner (Ministerial) in London whether he said the words "Fils de St. Louis," etc., and his answer that he could not recollect, his mind had been so taken up with the event. I think Lamartine, in his note to me, turns this unfairly; and I feel, and I am sure so will you and Mr. Butler, "What an egotist and what a puppy it is!" But ovation has turned his head.

On the 4th of February 1848, after a very short illness, Mrs. Lestock Wilson — Fanny Edgeworth—died. Maria survived her little more than a year. She bore the shock without apparent injury to her health, and she continued to employ herself with her usual benevolent interest and sympathy in all the business and pleasures of her family and friends; but strongly as she was attached to all her brothers and sisters, Fanny had been the dearest object of her love and admiration. To her friend Mrs. S. C. Hall, who wrote to her as usual on 1st January (1849), which was her birthday, she answered, "You must not delay long in finding

your way to Edgeworthstown if you mean to see me again. Remember, you have just congratulated me on my eighty-second birthday." In the spring she spent some weeks at Trim, where her sister Lucy and Dr. Robinson were with her. She seemed unusually agitated and depressed in taking leave of her sister Harriet and Mr. Butler, but said as she went away, "At Whitsuntide I shall return."

Only a few weeks before her death Miss Edgeworth wrote:

> Our pleasures in literature do not, I think, decline with age; last 1st of January was my eighty-second birthday, and I think that I had as much enjoyment from books as I ever had in my life.

In her last letter to her sister, Honora Beaufort, she enclosed the lines:

> Ireland, with all thy faults, thy follies too,
> I love thee still: still with a candid eye must view
> Thy wit, too quick, still blundering into sense
> Thy reckless humour: sad improvidence,
> And even what sober judges follies call,
> I, looking at the Heart, forget them all!
>
> MARIA E. *May* 1849.

On the morning of the 22nd of May Miss Edgeworth drove out, apparently in her usual health. On her return she was suddenly seized

with pain of the heart, and in a few hours breathed her last in the arms of her devoted stepmother and friend.[1]

Mrs. Edgeworth writes:

Maria had always wished that her friends should be spared the anguish of seeing her suffer in protracted illness; she had always wished to die at home, and that I should be with her—both her wishes were fulfilled.

Extremely small of stature, her figure continued slight, and all her movements singularly alert to the last. No one ever conversed with her for five minutes without forgetting the plainness of her features in the vivacity, benevolence, and genius expressed in her countenance.[2]

Particularly neat in her dress and in all her ways, she had everything belonging to her arranged in the most perfect order—habits of order early impressed upon her mind by Mrs. Honora Edgeworth, which, with her methodical way of doing business, enabled her to get through a surprising amount of multifarious work in the course of every day.

She wrote almost always in the library, undisturbed by the noise of the large family about her, and for many years on a little desk her father had made for her, and on which two years before his death he inscribed the following words:

"On this humble desk were written all the numerous

[1] Mrs. Edgeworth herself lived till 1865, greatly honoured and beloved.

[2] In her old age Miss Edgeworth used to say, "Nobody is anything worse than 'plain' now; no one is ugly now but myself,"—but no one thought her so.

works of my daughter, Maria Edgeworth, in the common sitting-room of my family. In these works, which were chiefly written to please me, she has never attacked the personal character of any human being or interfered with the opinions of any sect or party, religious or political; while endeavouring to inform and instruct others, she improved and amused her own mind and gratified her heart, which I do believe is better than her head.

"R. L. E."

She used afterwards a writing-desk which had been her father's, but when at home it was always placed on a little table of his construction, which is in my possession, and to which she had attached many ingenious contrivances—a bracket for her candlestick, a fire-screen, and places for her papers. This little table being on castors, she could move it from the sofa by the fire to the window, or into a recess behind the pillars of the library, where she generally sat in summer time. She wrote on folio sheets of paper, which she sewed together in chapters.

To facilitate the calculation of the MS. for printing, and to secure each page containing nearly the same amount of writing, she used to prick the margin of her paper at equal distances, and her father made a little machine set with points by which she could pierce several sheets at once. A full sketch of the story she was about to write was always required by her father before she began it, and though often much changed in its progress, the foundation and purpose remained as originally planned. She rose, as I have said, early, and after taking a cup of coffee and reading her letters, walked out till breakfast-time, a meal she always enjoyed especially (though she scarcely ate anything); she delighted to read out and talk over her letters of the day,

and listened a little to the newspapers, but she was no politician. She came into the breakfast-room in summer time with her hands full of roses, and always had some work or knitting to do while others ate. She generally sat down at her desk soon after breakfast and wrote till luncheon-time,—her chief meal in the day,—after which she did some needlework, often unwillingly, when eager about her letters or MSS., but obediently, as she had found writing directly after eating bad for her. Sometimes in the afternoon she drove out, always sitting with her back to the horses, and when quite at ease about them exceedingly enjoyed a short drive in an open carriage, not caring and often not knowing which road she went, talking and laughing all the time. She usually wrote all the rest of her afternoon, and in her latter years lay down and slept for an hour after dinner, coming down to tea and afterwards reading out herself, or working and listening to the reading out of some of the family. Her extreme enjoyment of a book made these evening hours delightful to her and to all her family. If her attention was turned to anything else, she always desired the reader to stop till she was able to attend, and even from the most apparently dull compositions she extracted knowledge or amusement. She often lingered after the usual bed-time to talk over what she had heard, full of bright or deep and solid observations, and gay anecdotes *à propos* to the work or its author.

She had amazing power of control over her feelings when occasion demanded, but in general her tears or her smiles were called forth by every turn of joy and sorrow among those she lived with. When she met in a stranger a kindred mind, her conversation upon every subject poured forth, was brilliant with wit and eloquence and a gaiety of heart which gave life to all she thought and said. But the

charms of society never altered her taste for domestic life; she was consistent from the beginning to the end. Though so exceedingly enjoying the intercourse of all the great minds she had known, she more enjoyed her domestic life with her nearest relations, when her spirits never flagged, and her wit and wisdom, which were never for show, were called forth by every little incident of the day. When my daughters were with Maria at Paris, they described to me the readiness with which she would return from the company of the greatest philosophers and wits of the day to superintend her young sisters' dress, or arrange some party of pleasure for them. "We often wonder what her admirers would say, after all the profound remarks and brilliant witticisms they have listened to, if they heard all her delightful nonsense with us." Much as she was gratified by her "success" in the society of her celebrated contemporaries, she never varied in her love for Home.

Her whole life, of eighty-three years, had been an aspiration after good.

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